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RILEY, NYE & FIELD

PERSONAL NOTES AND RECOLLECTIONS

By

EUGENE V. DEBS

(IN NATIONAL MAGAZINE)

Late in the seventies a sketch of country life in quaint and homely phrase, copied in one of our local papers, attracted my attention. The writer seemed to have dipped his pen into the very heart of my own experience as a hoosier lad, and the picture he drew, so faithfully true to the days of my childhood, appealed with irresistible charm to my delighted imagination. Eagerly I sought the writer's name. His imperishable fame was already achieved, so far as I was concerned.

James Whitcomb Riley! Who could he be? The name was totally strange to me. And yet I felt that the world knew—must surely know—this wonderful magician whose art had so enchanted me.

I soon learned that James Whitcomb Riley was none other than "Benj. F. Johnson of Boone," whose dialect verses, contributed to the Indianapolis *Journal* about that time, were eagerly read and gave the writer his early local fame as the "Hoosier Poet." Among these poems, which have since become familiar wherever the English language is spoken, were "The Frost is on the Punkin," "The Old Swimmin' Hole," and others, a dozen in all, which the author was persuaded by his devotees to have done into a modest little volume entitled "The Old Swimmin' Hole and 'Leven More Poems."

The home of the "Hoosier Poet" then, as now, was at Indianapolis, the state capital, whither he had gone after leaving his native town of Greenfield; and he was dividing his time between newspaper and literary work, and giving readings from his studies in child-lore and country life to local audiences at surrounding points.

Impatient to see this native genius of the hoosier soil, who[w] keen poetic insight, sympathetic interpretation and charmi[n]

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dialect had so appealed to my imagination, I boarded a train for Indianapolis, only to find on arrival, to my great disappointment and regret, that Mr. Riley was absent from the city. But I met George Hitt, of the *Morning Journal*, who was then Riley's manager and booking agent, and through him I arranged for an early date for the rising young poet and humorist at Terre Haute.

SLOCUM
JUL 21 1954

The first appearance of the "Hoosier Poet" in our city was anything but a shining success, although the poet gave a brilliant exhibition of his wonderful powers as a mimic and as a personator of the characters sketched in his poems and studies. The entertainment was given in the old Dowling Hall, and there was a painfully diminutive attendance.

Riley himself had more than measured up to expectations. He was, indeed, a delicious treat to those who could appreciate his quaint humor, his melting pathos, his poetic imagery and his flawlessly faithful impersonation. His hoosier farmer was fresh from the soil, a breathing, boasting, homespun reality. His dandified schoolmaster teaching a country class was the very perfection of mimic art, while his child-stories, told in their own simple, guileless fashion and accentuated with their own eager, impulsive gestures, were too marvelously true to nature to admit of even the faintest suspicion that, in heart and imagination, the poet had outgrown his own elysian childhood.

Surely, I argued to myself that night, this settles the question of Riley's genius, and never again will the God-gifted "Hoosier Poet" be humiliated by so paltry an audience in Terre Haute. On his next visit he will without doubt be greeted by an overflowing house and given a rapturous ovation.

But alas! the second audience was even smaller than the first. My surprise and mortification may be imagined. But I was

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more than ever determined that the people of Terre Haute should *see* James Whitcomb Riley and realize that a poet had sprung up out of their own soil—a native wild flower at their very feet—whose fame would spread over all the land and beyond the seas to the most distant shores.

A third attempt resulted in another dismal failure. The people—except the few—refused to be interested in this native interpreter of the common life, this poet of childhood's fairy world, this sweet, homely singer of bees and honeysuckles, babbling brooks and laughing meadows, clover blossoms and tinkling bells, and the low-roofed cabin of content, half-hidden in its perfumed setting of hollyhocks and old-fashioned roses.

Repeated efforts to awaken them with the glad tidings that a new sun had risen in their hoosier skies all proved unavailing until some years later when Riley, having met Bill Nye in the meantime, whose fame as a humorous philosopher was then in the ascendant, was invited, at the instance of the latter, to appear before the assembled authors and their guests at their national entertainment in New York City.

It was on this occasion that Riley made the "hit" of his life. He fairly electrified the sedate authors and their friends, and the following morning the whole country was reading of his wonderful performance.

The entertainment was given at the Academy of Music, and it was crowded to the doors with authors, poets, writers and their friends. The leading lights in contemporaneous literature were there. Lowell, Twain, Howells, Cable and other celebrities were all on the program, and read selections from their works. Bill Nye had been invited to give a dash of humor to the occasion. At his request Riley attended him, and when Nye had given his number on the program he responded to an enthusiastic encore—with Riley.

Few in that amazed literary audience had ever seen Riley before, and not many had even heard of him. He was still in his boyhood, and now this untutored hoosier lad, like Burns at Edinburg, found himself in the presence of the assembled poets, artists and celebrities of his day.

To be sure, he had already received a letter from Longfellow, highly commending a poem which chanced to come under the eye of the elder poet, but his fame was chiefly confined to his native state and even there to limited circles.

But when he rendered his dialect masterpiece, "When the Frost is on the Punkin," in his own inimitable style, on the stage of the Academy of Music that memorable day, he thrilled with ecstasy the cold and critical literary audience which had been surfeited with dignified and prosaic discourse, and the house echoed and re-echoed with excited applause.

The strange young poet and actor had fairly lifted his listeners out of their seats and transported them to realms of homely poetic imagery hitherto unknown to them.

Astonishment and delight were equally blended in the faces of his applauding listeners. Riley was a revelation to the cultured and scholarly circles of the eastern metropolis. He was as refreshing to them as a breath from the prairies of his native state.

James Russell Lowell, his face aglow with eager interest, leaned over to William Dean Howells and asked:

"Who is that wonderful young man?"

"That," answered Howells, "is James Whitcomb Riley of Indiana."

"He's the greatest poet in America," was Lowell's remarkable and flattering tribute.

Riley's fame was achieved. At a single bound he had reached the summit. His name was on the lips of everyone, and the

account of his extraordinary conquest was flashed over all the land.

Mrs. Grover Cleveland, whose husband was then President, was in the audience. Her enthusiasm was boundless. Riley must visit the White House, Mrs. Cleveland urged, that the President and his friends might also enjoy his poetic charm and his marvelous art. The invitation was accepted, and at the national Capitol the poet added fresh lustre to his fame.

The whole country was now clamoring to see and hear Riley. Amos J. Walker, his booking agent, was deluged with applications for dates. Amos, a genial fellow and something of a wit himself, is still remembered at Indianapolis, where he made his home and headquarters. It was he, according to Riley, who originated the story instead of Nye, to whom it was generally credited, about the clever young chap who was a guest at a dinner and excused himself to the hostess for declining to carve the fowl on the ground that he "never could make the gravy match the wall paper."

Of course Indiana was proud of her blue-eyed son's meteoric rise to national fame. It was she who had given the "Hoosier Poet" to the world, and he in turn had loaded her with honors.

Tremendous ovations greeted Riley on his return. Terre Haute, like other hoosier cities, now knew him. They had not seen him, nor cared to see him, but now that he had been lionized by the elect in a distant state, his genius flashed upon them, and they yearned to do him honor.

When he next came to Terre Haute the auditorium was packed to the last inch of standing room, and hundreds were turned away. On his previous visits only a handful of people were willing to pay twenty-five cents to see and hear him. Now they eagerly gave up a dollar and many were denied at that.

The entrance to the auditorum that night was littered with

overshoes and articles of apparel as the result of the fierce struggle of the surging throng in the corridors to force its way through the doors to obtain even standing room.

From that time to this Riley's popularity has been at high tide with our people, and were he to return today there is not a house in the city that would hold the multitude that would pour out to see and applaud him.

On his several visits to our home we came to know how the people, especially the children, loved him. Long before he was awake in the morning the little folks had already gathered in the waiting room to greet him. One little miss of five was in tears when she told us how hard her father had tried to get her into the opera house to see Riley the night before and had failed. That was why she was first of the children at our house the following morning, and when we assured her that she should see Riley, her eyes fairly beamed with joy. A little later her cup was full. She had her dimpled arms about her idol's neck and was covering his face with kisses and telling him how she loved him.

Then Riley explained to her how lucky she was, after all, not to get to see him on the stage, for, said he, "Don't you see how much better looking I am when you are close to me?" Of course he was, and his delighted little lover clapped her hands in childish glee.

Another doting lassie, black-eyed and beautiful, declared her undying love for the children's poet. Oh, the sweet candor of the unpolluted child heart!

She wore a necklace with a clasped heart for a charm, and when he told her how pretty it was and added, "That's the kind I used to wear when I was a little girl," she regarded him with wonder for a moment and then burst into joyous laughter.

One morning when he and I were quite alone he gave Shakes-

peare's "Seven Ages of Man." It was so startlingly realistic from the puling infant to the palsied old dotard that I exclaimed:

"If you'll do that on the stage it will make you a million dollars."

"I'd not do it on the stage for a million dollars," he quietly answered.

Sol Smith Russell used to declare that Riley had the most wonderful face he had ever seen. "If I only had Riley's face!" he would say to his friends. "Yes," answered Riley, "and if I only had Sol Smith Russell's legs! He has the most versatile and accomplished legs in the world."

Russell, in response to an encore in his "Poor Relation" at Terre Haute, gave "Nothin' to say, my daughter!" and rendered this bit of exquisite dialect pathos with most touching effect. The audience was moved to tears. "I beg your pardon," he modestly said in answer to the applause, "no one living can do justice to those tender and beautiful lines but James Whitcomb Riley."

How strange it seems that this wonderfully gifted actor never became reconciled to the stage! He had a vague dread of the footlights; an unconquerable aversion to the stage. Often I have heard him say that it was the refinement of torture to him to have to go through his public program.

When he retired at night he took an armful of books to his room and, propped up comfortably in his bed, he would read, oblivious of the passing hours, until almost daylight.

Riley always had a dread of railroad schedules and he certainly is the poorest kind of a traveler. "Something will happen sure before I get there," he is wont to say. Once at Indianapolis, waiting for a train at the station, I espied him in a coach on an outgoing train. Rushing in to have a word with

him before the train drew out, I found him ill at ease. He was traveling alone to fill an engagement in the East, but he wasn't sure he was on the right train, and he had some doubt as to his ticket. I assured him he was on the right train and asked him to let me see his ticket.

Sure enough! he had the wrong ticket. Fortunately, however, there was time enough to have the change made before the train was due to leave. But he was still haunted with vague misgivings as to what might happen before he reached his destination when I bade him goodbye.

I first met Bill Nye in the fall of 1886 when he and Riley were touring the country together and drawing crowded houses to their unique entertainment. They were a great team, and aside from their cordial professional relations they loved each other sincerely and their friendship ended only with Nye's death.

Years before I had been a reader of Nye's "Boomerang," the breezy weekly edited and published by him at Laramie, Wyoming, through which he became widely known as a humorist and writer of funny stories.

When I visited Laramie in the early nineties, I met "Bill" Root, Nye's old side partner, who was quite as full of wit and drollery as Nye himself, and he had a great stock of rich stories about their pioneer experiences in Wyoming. Their office was at one time in a mule barn, and I was shown one of the doors, which still bore traces of their wit. The legend inscribed upon it and which was still legible read: "Twist the mule's tail and take the elevator."

Bill Nye was a most lovable charcter, kindly, gentle and whole-hearted, and full of innocent fun. There was an incessant interchange of wit between him and Riley when they were

together. Their contact was mutually infectious and inspiriting, and it was a real treat to have an hour with these two princes of the platform.

Bill Nye was something more than a mere humorist and funny story-teller. He was a philosopher. Beneath his flow of humor there was a sub-stratum of serious meditation. He was the master of pathos as well as the lord of laughter.

Amos J. Walker, already mentioned as the booking agent of Riley in his early days, was also the manager of the Nye-Riley combination. His letter-head read: "Sole Manager of Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley, America's Greatest Humorous Combination." They had a wonderfully "fetching" program. Poetry, prose sketches, stories and character delineations, all rich with wit, humor and pathos, flashed and sparkled from the opening to the close of the entertainment.

The houses were packed and the audiences delighted. Nye told of one exception. They were in a western camp, and a couple of cowboys drifted in. The program was about half finished and they had been doing their very best, when one of the cow punchers yawned aloud and said to his partner, "Say, Jack, when is this d—— show going to start?"

One day Nye appeared quite downcast. They were to appear in the first engagement of what was to be an extended tour.

"What's the matter?" anxiously inquired Riley. "I'm in a sad predicament," gravely answered Nye, and then after a pause, "I've brought the wrong set of gestures with me."

One of Nye's cleverest skits was his imitation of an overtrained high school girl reading her graduating essay. It never failed to convulse the audience with merriment. Here are two or three lines from the "essay":

"The autumn leaves are falling—falling pro and con."

* * * * * * * *

"The autumn leaves are falling—falling everywhere,
Some are in the atmosphere, and some are in the air."

A wholesome contempt for the shoddy aristocracy was one of Nye's marked characteristics. The daughter of a certain newly-rich family was making desperate efforts to break into swell society. Nye observed that she was entitled to shine because her "father was the justly celebrated inventor of a fluent pill."

To the keen and searching eye of Bill Nye there was a humorous side to everything. Humor was to him the essence of wisdom, the savor of life. He delighted in expressing himself and interpreting his friends in terms of kindly, genial, good-natured humor. If he was vexed for a moment, he found relief in seeking out the funny side of his vexation so that he might laugh it away.

On one of his visits to Terre Haute he lost a valuable umbrella which had been a gift to him. He was quite distressed about it, but somewhat relieved when I assured him that I thought it would be recovered. A few days later I received a letter from him asking, "Have you received any tidings of the beautiful umbrella I had the pleasure of losing at Terre Haute?" The lost umbrella was never recovered, but Nye's unfailing humor always was.

A late spring prompted Nye to quote the words, "Winter lingers in the lap of Spring," and to this he added with characteristic wit, "Yes, and the neighbors are beginning to talk about it."

Nye once complained to Riley that he had an "ecru" feeling and suspected that his "thorax" was out of plumb. Riley ven-

tured to suggest it might be his "sweetbread" that required attention.

In the last communication I received from Nye, shortly before his untimely death at his home on the French Broad in North Carolina he wrote: "I hope you can arrange business so that you can take Mrs. Debs by the hand and lead her down here into this curious and beautiful country. Cigars, apollinaris and such things, including cold watermelon and a warm welcome, are to be had here by giving the proper sign. Open day and night."

The many millions that Nye made joyous and care-free with the laughter his wit provoked will lovingly remember him as one of the real benefactors of mankind.

Eugene Field was by nature a prince of fine fellows. I never knew a more genial, generous companion; a more loyal, steadfast friend. I met him for the first time in the spring of 1893, on which occasion he presented me with several volumes of his poetry and prose writings inscribed, in his wonderfully small and exact hand, "With very much Love." He wrote like fine steel print and could crowd an essay onto a postal card.

Field was tall and spare, though not ungainly. As an entertainer he was at his best in the pathetic passages of his own character sketches. He rendered these with marvelous effect upon his hearers.

Like Riley, whom he resembled strongly in many ways, he was an intense lover of children, and if there were any little ones about he was very apt to forsake the grown folks. To the children he was himself in all the exuberance of his own buoyant childhood. To them he sang the songs they inspired in him, the soft, sweet lullabys; to them he told the wonder-stories drawn from their own fairyland imagination, and

with them he romped and played with all the zest and abandon of his carefree soul.

Field came to Terre Haute soon after I first met him. He was then on the lyceum platform with George W. Cable, the novelist, and they were giving public entertainments consisting of readings from their works. On this occasion they were greeted with a fine audience at the opera house. Field surpassed himself, and the program was greatly extended by the repeated encores to which he graciously responded.

That night we were the guests of a mutual friend, and while sitting in the drawing room Field, who had heard the voices of children in an adjoining room, quietly disappeared. Soon thereafter shouts of joy and peals of merriment rang through the house. Something unusually frolicsome had broken out among the children. What could it be? The door was opened, and there was Field, in his dress suit, minus his coat, down on all fours, in the center of a group of excited children, all screaming with delight. Such a picture!

Field was in his element among the children. He was one of them. He played and romped and rolled on the floor and kicked up his heels in all the reckless abandon of a boy just out of school. He made grimaces, sang funny songs, told funny stories and mocked funny people. From the depths of his great heart he loved the children. And how they loved him!

The year after I first met Field the Pullman strike occurred. Chicago was the storm center, and great excitement prevailed. There were troublous times ahead. One day when events threatened a serious crisis I found in my letter-box at the hotel a note in Field's hand which read: "You will soon need a friend; let me be that friend."

This was high proof of personal loyalty at a time when in-

tense bitterness prevailed, and when such an avowal meant ostracism and execration.

When Field was out West in his early years he was a prime favorite with the rough and ready element on what was then the frontier and about the primitive mining camps. He loved the rugged pioneers and prospectors of that day and they inspired some of his most rapturous verse:

"Oh, them days on Red Hoss Mountain, when the skies wuz fair 'nd blue,
When the money flowed like likker, 'nd the folks wuz brave 'nd true!
When the nights wuz crisp 'nd balmy, 'nd the camp wuz all astir,
With the joints all throwed wide open, 'nd no sheriff to demur."

He was at home among the common people and he was the life of the frontier settlement or mining camp in which he chanced to be located. As a practical joker he was without a rival. He was constantly plotting mischief of some kind to amuse the boys and they looked to him to relieve the monotony of the camp. In Denver, then a small and breezy city on the plains, he caused quite a stir by inserting a notice in the paper upon which he was employed, to the effect that Wolf Londoner, the leading provision merchant, had just received a carload of fine watermelons direct from Georgia, and that every colored man would be given one free that morning. Londoner wondered what had broken loose when a mob of excited colored folks, men, women and children, swooped down on his store, and he had no little difficulty in explaining that he had been made the victim of another of Gene Field's practical jokes.

Field was almost the only literary genius I have ever known who was entirely free from crotchets and eccentricities. He was at all times the same simple, guileless, unpretentious fellow: the same generous, free-hearted loving friend, and he was never so happy as when he was making others so. He did not stint in the use of his gifts to afford enjoyment to his friends. He did not need to be coaxed. It was enough for him that his readings and recitals gave joy to others. There might be few or many, and they had but to name their favorite sketch or poem. He did not weary in thus giving himself freely and without price. He used to say, "Tell me what you wish to hear and I will be glad to give it to you." And he would respond with all the naivete of a child to every request and with such evident heartiness as to enhance the charm of his personality and the delight of his entertainment.

The last message that came to me from Eugene Field was followed closely by his death, which came so suddenly that it caused a painful shock to his many friends. I was in Woodstock at the time. Field wrote:

"You are now settled in your summer quarters, and I'll soon be out to see you." A day or two later I picked up the morning paper to note with the profoundest sorrow the announcement of his death. He had not been ill. He was still in the rosy flush of his young manhood. He had retired as usual and "fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still."

Eugene Field, like James Whitcomb Riley, was the poet of the common life. He dignified the homely virtues and idealized the everyday things that make up the sum of earthly existence.

As poets, wits and humorists, Riley, Nye and Field are distinctively American types. Nye and Field have passed to the realms of rest. Riley remains the spared monument. All of them have written their names in fadeless letters in the annals of mankind.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

AN ADDRESS
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BY

Eugene V. Debs

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INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

(Chairman Rozelle:—I have the pleasure now to introduce to you one whom you all know, Eugene V. Debs.)

There is inspiration in your greeting and my heart opens wide to receive it. I have come a thousand miles to join with you in fanning the flames of the proletarian revolution. (Applause).

Your presence here makes this a vitalizing atmosphere for a labor agitator. I can feel my stature increasing, and this means that you are growing, for all my strength is drawn from you, and without you I am nothing.

In capitalist society you are the lower class; the capitalists are the upper class—because they are on your backs; if they were not on your backs, they could not be above you. (Applause and laughter).

Standing in your presence, I can see in your gleaming eyes and in your glowing faces the vanguard; I can hear the tramp, I can feel the thrill of the social revolution. The working class are waking up. (A voice, "you bet"). They are beginning to understand that their economic interests are identical, that they must unite and act together economically and politically and in every other way; that only by united action can they overthrow the capitalist system and emancipate themselves from wage-slavery. (Applause).

I have said that in capitalist society the working class are the lower class; they have always been the lower class. In the ancient world for thousands of years they were abject slaves; in the Middle Ages, serfs; in modern times, wage-workers; to become free men in socialism is the next inevitable phase in our civilization. (Applause). The working class have struggled through all the various phases of their development, and they are to-day engaged in the last stage of the animal struggle for existence; and when the present revolution has run its course, the working class will stand forth the sovereigns of this earth.

In capitalist society the working man is not, in fact, a man at all; as a wage-worker, he is simply merchandise; he is bought in the open market the same as hair, hides, salt, or any other form of merchandise. The very termin-

ology of the capitalist system proves that he is not a man in any sense of that term.

When the capitalist needs you as a working man to operate his machine, he does not advertise, he does not call for men, but for "hands"; and when you see a placard posted "Fifty hands wanted," you stop on the instant; you know that that means YOU, and you take a bee-line for the bureau of employment to offer yourself, in evidence of the fact that you are a "hand." When the capitalist advertises for hands, that is what he wants. He would be insulted if you were to call him a "hand." He has his capitalist politician tell you, when your vote is wanted, that you ought to be very proud of your hands because they are horny; and if that is true, he ought to be ashamed of his. (Laughter and applause).

What is your status in society to-day? You are a human being, a wage-worker. Here you stand just as you were created, and you have two hands that represent your labor power; but you do not work and why not?—For this simple reason, that you have no tools with which to work; you cannot compete against the machinery of the capitalist with your bare hands; you cannot work unless you have access to it, and you can only secure access to it by selling your labor power, that is to say your energy, your vitality, your life itself, to the capitalist who owns the tool with which you work, and without which you are idle and suffer all of the ills that idleness entails.

In the evolution of capitalism, society has been divided mainly into two economic classes: a relatively small class of capitalists who own tools in the form of great machines they did not make and cannot use, and a great body of many millions of workers who did make these tools and who do use them, and whose very lives depend upon them, yet who do not own them; and these millions of wage-workers, producers of wealth, are forced into the labor market, in competition with each other, disposing of their labor power to the capitalist class, in consideration of just enough of what they produce to keep them in working order. They are exploited of the greater share of what their labor produces, so that while, upon the one hand, they can produce

in great abundance, upon the other, they can consume but that share of the product that their meagre wage will buy; and every now and then it follows that they have produced more than can be consumed in the present system, and then they are displaced by the very products of their own labor; the mills and shops and mines and quarries in which they are employed, close down, the tools are locked up and they are locked out, and they find themselves idle and helpless in the shadow of the very abundance their labor has created. There is no hope for them in this system. They are beginning to realize this fact, and so they are beginning to organize themselves; they are no longer relying upon some one else to emancipate them, but they are making up their minds to depend upon themselves and to organize for their own emancipation.

Too long have the workers of the world waited for some Moses to lead them out of bondage. He has not come; he never will come. I would not lead you out if I could; for if you could be led out, you could be led back again. (Applause). I would have you make up your minds that there is nothing that you cannot do for yourselves. You do not need the capitalist. He could not exist an instant without you. You would just begin to live without him. (Laughter and prolonged applause). You do everything and he has everything; and some of you imagine that if it were not for him you would have no work. As a matter of fact, he does not employ you at all; you employ him to take from you what you produce, and he faithfully sticks to his task. If you can stand it, he can; and if you don't change this relation, I am sure he won't. You make the automobile, he rides in it. If it were not for you, he would walk; and if it were not for him, you would ride.

The capitalist politician tells you on occasion that you are the salt of the earth; and if you are, you had better begin by salting down the capitalist class.

The revolutionary movement of the working class will date from the year 1905, from the organization of the INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD. (Prolonged applause). Economic solidarity is to-day the supreme need of the working class. The old form of unionism has long

since fulfilled its mission and outlived its usefulness, and the hour has struck for a change.

The old unionism is organized upon the basis of the identity of interests of the capitalist and working classes. It spends its time and energy trying to harmonize these two essentially antagonistic classes; and so this unionism has at its head a harmonizing board called the Civic Federation. This federation consists of three parts; a part representing the capitalist class; a part supposed to represent the working class, and still another part that is said to represent the "public." The capitalists are represented by that great union labor champion, August Belmont. (Laughter and hisses). The working class is represented by Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor (hisses and cry "sick him,") and the public, by Grover Cleveland. (Laughter).

Can you imagine a fox and goose peace congress? Just fancy such a meeting, the goose lifting its wings in benediction, and the fox whispering "Let us prey."

The Civic Federation has been organized for the one purpose of prolonging the age-long sleep of the working class. Their supreme purpose is to keep you from waking up. (A voice: "They can't do it.")

The Industrial Workers has been organized for an opposite purpose, and its representatives come in your presence to tell you that there can be no peace between you, the working class, and the capitalist class who exploit you of what you produce; that as workers, you have economic interests apart from and opposed to their interests, and that you must organize by and for yourselves; and that if you are intelligent enough to understand these interests, you will sever your relations with the old unions in which you are divided and sub-divided, and join the Industrial Workers, in which all are organized and united upon the basis of the class struggle. (Applause).

The Industrial Workers is organized, not to conciliate, but to fight the capitalist class. We have no object in concealing any part of our mission; we would have it perfectly understood. We deny that there is anything in common between workingmen and capitalists. We insist that working-

men must organize to get rid of capitalists and make themselves the masters of the tools with which they work, freely employ themselves, secure to themselves all they produce, and enjoy to the full the fruit of their labors. (Applause).

The old union movement is not only organized upon the basis of the identity of interests of the exploited and exploiting classes, but it divides instead of uniting the workers, and there are thousands of unions, more or less in conflict, used against one another; and so long as these countless unions occupy the field, there will be no substantial unity of the working class. (Applause).

And here let me say that the most zealous supporter of the old union is the capitalist himself. August Belmont, president of the Civic Federation, takes special pride in declaring himself a "union man" (laughter); but he does not mean by that that he is an Industrial Worker, that is not the kind of a union he means. He means the impotent old union that Mr. Gompers and Mr. Mitchell lead, the kind that keeps the working class divided so that the capitalist system may be perpetuated indefinitely.

For thirty years I have been connected with the organized labor movement. I have long since been made to realize that the pure and simple union can do nothing for the working class; I have had some experience and know whereof I speak.

The craft union seeks to establish its own petty supremacy. Craft division is fatal to class unity. To organize along craft lines means to divide the working class and make it the prey of the capitalist class. The working class can only be unionized efficiently along class lines; and so the Industrial Workers has been organized, not to isolate the crafts but to unite the whole working class. (Applause).

The working class has had considerable experience during the past few years. In every conflict between labor and capital, labor has been defeated. Take the leading strikes in their order, and you will find that, without a single exception, the organized workers have been defeated, and thousands upon thousands of them have lost their jobs, and many of them have become "scabs." Is there not something wrong with a unionism in which the workers are always worsted?

Let me review hurriedly some of this history of the past few years.

I have seen the conductors on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, organized in a craft union, take the places of the striking union locomotive engineers on the same system.

I have seen the employes of the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway, organized in their several craft unions, stand by the corporation as a unit, totally wiping out the union telegraphers, thirteen hundred of them losing their jobs.

I have seen these same craft unions, just a little while ago, on the Northern Pacific and Great Northern systems—I have seen them unite with the corporation to crush out the telegraphers' union, and defeat the strikers, their own co-unionists and fellow employes.

Just a few weeks ago, in the city of Chicago, the switchmen on the Grand Trunk went out on strike. All their fellow unionists remained at work and faithfully served the corporation until the switchmen were defeated, and now those union switchmen are scattered about looking for jobs.

The machinists were recently on strike in Chicago. They went out in a body under the direction of their craft union. Their fellow unionists all remained at work until the machinists were completely defeated, and now their organization in that city is on the verge of collapse.

There has been a ceaseless repetition of this form of scabbing of one craft union upon another until the working man, if his eyes are open, is bound to see that this kind of unionism is a curse and not a benefit to the working class.

The American Federation of Labor does not learn by experience. They recently held their annual convention, and they passed the same old stereotyped resolutions; they are going to petition Congress to restrict the power of the courts; that is to say, they are going to once more petition a capitalist Congress to restrict the power of capitalist courts. That is as if a flock of sheep were to petition a lot of wolves to extract their own fangs. They have passed these resolutions over and over again. They have been totally fruitless and they will continue to be.

What good came to the working class from this conven-

tion? Put your finger upon a single thing they did that will be of any real benefit to the workers of the country!

You have had some experience here in New York. You have plenty of unionism here, such as it is, yet there is not a city in the country in which the workers are less organized than they are here in New York. It was in March last that you had here an exhibition of pure and simple unionism. You saw about six thousand craft union men go out on strike, and you saw their fellow unionists remain at work loyally until all the strikers were defeated and sacrificed. Here you have an object lesson that is well calculated to set you thinking, and this is all I can hope to do by coming here, set you thinking, and for yourselves; for when you begin to think, you will soon begin to act for yourselves. You will then sever your relations with capitalist unions and capitalist parties (applause), and you will begin the real work of organizing your class, and that is what we of the Industrial Workers have engaged to do. We have a new mission. That mission is not merely the amelioration of the condition of the working class, but the complete emancipation of that class from slavery. (Applause).

The Industrial Workers is going to do all for the working class that can be done in the capitalist system, but while it is engaged in doing that, its revolutionary eye will be fixed upon the goal; and there will be a great difference between a strike of revolutionary workers and a strike of ignorant trade unionists who but vaguely understand what they want and do not know how to get that. (Applause).

The Industrial Workers is less than six months old, and already has a round hundred thousand of dues-paying members. (Applause). This splendid achievement has no parallel in the annals of organized labor. From every direction come the applications for charters and for organizers, and when the delegates of this revolutionary economic organization meet in the city of Chicago, next year, it will be the greatest convention that ever met in the United States in the interest of the working class. (Applause).

This organization has a world-wide mission; it makes its appeal directly to the working class. It asks no favors from capitalists.

No organization of working men has ever been so flagrantly misrepresented by the capitalist press as has been the Industrial Workers of the World; every delegate to the Chicago convention will bear testimony to this fact; and this is as it should be; the capitalist press is the mouthpiece of the capitalist class, and the very fact that the capitalist press is the organ, virtually, of the American Federation of Labor, is in itself sufficient to open the eyes of the working class.

If the American Federation of Labor were not in alliance with the capitalist class, the capitalist press would not pour its fulsome eulogy upon it.

This press has not one friendly word for the Industrial Workers, not one, and we do not expect it to have. These papers of the plutocrats know us and we know them (applause); between us there is no misunderstanding.

The workers of the country (the intelligent ones at least) readily see the difference between revolutionary and reactionary unionism, and that is why thy are deserting the old and joining the new; that is why the Industrial Workers is building up so rapidly; that is why there is such a widespread demand for organizers and for literature and for all other means of building up this class-conscious economic organization. (Applause).

As I have said, the Industrial Workers begin by declaring that there is nothing in common between capitalists and wage-workers.

The capitalists own the tools they do not use, and the workers use the tools they do not own.

The capitalists, who own the tools that the working class use appropriate to themselves what the working class produce, and this accounts for the fact that a few capitalists become fabulously rich while the toiling millions remain in poverty, ignorance and dependence.

Let me make this point perfectly clear for the benefit of those who have not thought it out for themselves. Andrew Carnegie is a type of the capitalist class. He owns the tools with which steel is produced. These tools are used by many thousands of working men. Andrew Carnegie, who owns these tools, has absolutely nothing to do with the production of steel. He may be in Scotland, or where he will, the pro-

duction of steel goes forward just the same. His mills at Pittsburg, Duquesne and Homestead, where these tools are located, are thronged with thousands of tool-less wage-workers, who work day and night, in winter's cold and summer's heat, who endure all the privations and make all the sacrifices of health and limb and life, producing thousands upon thousands of tons of steel, yet not having an interest, even the slightest, in the product. Carnegie, who owns the tools, appropriates the product, and the workers, in exchange for their labor power, receive a wage that serves to keep them in producing order; and the more industrious they are, and the more they produce, the worse they are off; for the sooner they have produced more than Carnegie can get rid of in the markets, then the tool houses are shut down and the workers are locked out in the cold.

This is a beautiful arrangement for Mr. Carnegie; he does not want a change, and so he is in favor of the Civic Federation, and a leading member of it; and he is doing what he can to induce you to think that this ideal relation ought to be maintained forever.

Now, what is true of steel production is true of every other department of industrial activity; you belong to the millions who have no tools, who cannot work without selling your labor power, and when you sell that, you have got to deliver it in person; you cannot send it to the mill, you have got to carry it there; you are inseparable from your labor power.

You have got to go to the mill at 7 in the morning and work until 6 in the evening, producing, not for yourself, but for the capitalist who owns the tools you made and use, and without which you are almost as helpless as if you had no arms.

This fundamental fact in modern industry you must recognize, and you must organize upon the basis of this fact; you must appeal to your class to join the union that is the true expression of your economic interests, and this union must be large enough to embrace you all, and such is the Industrial Workers of the World.

Every man and every woman who works for wages is eligible to membership.

Organized into various departments, when you join you

become a member of the department that represents your craft, or occupation, whatever it may be; and when you have a grievance, your department has supervision of it; and if you fail to adjust it in that department, you are not limited to your craft alone for support, but, if necessary, all the workers in all other departments will unite solidly in your defense to the very last. (Applause).

Take a plant in modern industry. The workers, under the old form of unionism, are parceled out to a score or more of unions. Craft division incites craft jealousy and so they are more or less in conflict with each other, and the employer constructively takes advantage of this fact, and that is why he favors pure and simple unionism.

It were better for the workers who wear craft fetters if they were not organized at all, for then they could and would spontaneously go out on strike together; but they cannot do this in craft unionism, for certain crafts bind themselves up in craft agreements, and after they have done this, they are at the mercy of the capitalist; and when their fellow unionists call upon them for aid, they make the very convenient excuse that they cannot help them, that they must preserve the sanctity of the contract they have made with the employer. This so-called contract is regarded as of vastly more importance than the jobs, aye, the very lives of the workingmen themselves.

We do not intend that certain departments shall so attach themselves to the capitalist employers. We purpose that the workers shall all be organized, and if there is any agreement, it will embrace them all; and if there is any violation of the agreement, in the case of a single employe, it at once becomes the concern of all. (Applause). That is unionism, industrial unionism, in which all of the workers, totally regardless of occupation, are united compactly within the one organization, so that at all times they can act together in the interests of all. It is upon this basis that the Industrial Workers of the World is organized. It is in this spirit and with this object in view that it makes its appeal to the working class.

Then, again, the revolutionary economic organization has a new and important function which has never once been

thought of in the old union, for the simple reason that the old union intends that the wage system shall endure forever.

The Industrial Workers declares that the workers must make themselves the masters of the tools with which they work; and so a very important function of this new union is to teach the workers, or, rather, have them teach themselves the necessity of fitting themselves to take charge of the industries in which they are employed when they are wrested, as they will be, from their capitalist masters. (Applause).

So when you join the Industrial Workers you feel the thrill of a new aspiration; you are no longer a blind, dumb wage-slave. You begin to understand your true and vital relation to your fellow-workers. In the Industrial Workers you are co-related to all other workers in the plant, and thus you develop the embryonic structure of the co-operative commonwealth. (Applause).

The old unionism would have you contented. We Industrial Workers are doing what we can to increase your discontent. We would have you rise in revolt against wage-slavery. The working man who is contented to-day is truly a pitiable object. (Applause).

Victor Hugo once said: "Think of a smile in chains,"—that is a working man who, under the influence of the Civic Federation, is satisfied with his lot; he is glad he has a master, has some one to serve; for, in his ignorance, he imagines that he is dependent upon the master.

The Industrial Workers is appealing to the working class to develop their latent powers and above all, their capacity for clear thinking.

You are a working man and you have a brain and if you do not use it in your own interests, you are guilty of high treason to your manhood. (Applause).

It is for the very reason that you do not use your brain in your interests that you are compelled to deform your body in the interests of your master.

I have already said that the capitalist is on your back; he furnishes the mouth, you the hands; he consumes, you produce. That is why he runs largely to stomach and you to hands. (Laughter).

I would not be a capitalist; I would be a man; you cannot be both at the same time. (Applause).

The capitalist exists by exploitation, lives out of the labor, that is to say the life, of the working man; consumes him, and his code of morals and standard of ethics justify it and this proves that capitalism is cannibalism. (Applause).

A man, honest, just, high-minded, would scorn to live out of the sweat and sorrow of his fellow man—by preying upon his weaker brother.

We propose to destroy the capitalist and save the man. (Applause). We want a system in which the worker shall get what he produces and the capitalist shall produce what he gets. (Applause). That is a square deal.

The prevailing lack of unity implies the lack of class consciousness. The workers do not yet understand that they are engaged in a class struggle, that they must unite their class and get on the right side of that struggle economically, politically and in every other way—(applause), strike together, vote together and, if necessary, fight together. (Prolonged applause).

The capitalist and the leader of the pure and simple union do what they can to wipe out the class lines; they do not want you to recognize the *class* struggle; they contrive to keep you divided, and as long as you are divided, you will remain where you are, robbed and helpless.

When you unite and act together, the world is yours. (Prolonged applause).

The fabled Samson, shorn of his locks, the secret of his power, was the sport and prey of the pygmies that tormented him. The modern working class, shorn of their tools, the secret of their power, are at the mercy of a small class who exploit them of what they produce and then hold them in contempt because of their slavery.

No master ever had the slightest respect for his slave any more than any slave ever had the least real love for his master.

Between these two classes there is an irrepressible conflict, and we Industrial Workers are pointing it out that you may see it, that you may get on the right side of it, that you may get together and emancipate yourselves from every form of servitude.

It can be done in no other way; but a bit of sober reasoning will convince you workers of this fact.

It is so simple that a child can see it. Why can't you? You can if you will think for yourselves and see for yourselves. But you will not do this if you were taught in the old union school; you will still look to someone else to lead that you may follow; for you are trained to follow the blind leaders of the blind. You have been betrayed over and over again ,and there will be no change until you make up your minds to think and see and act for yourselves.

I would not have you blindly walk into the Industrial Workers; if I had sufficient influence or power to draw you into it, I would not do it. I would have you stay where you are until you can see your way clear to join it of your own accord. It is your organization; it is composed of your class; it is committed to the interests of your class; it is going to fight for your class, for your whole class, and continue the fight until your class is emancipated. (Applause).

There is a great deal of opposition to this organization. The whole capitalist class and all their labor lieutenants are against it (applause); and there is an army of them, and all their names are on the pay-roll and expense account. They all hold salaried positions, and are looking out for themselves.

When the working class unite, there will be a lot of jobless labor leaders. (Applause).

In many of these craft unions they have it so arranged that the rank and file do not count for any more than if they were so many sheep. In the railroad organizations, for instance, if the whole membership vote to go out on strike, they cannot budge without the official sanction of the Grand Chief. His word outweighs that of the entire membership. In the light of this extraordinary fact, is it strange that the workers are often betrayed? Is it strange that they continue at the mercy of their exploiters?

Haven't they had quite enough of this? Isn't it time for them to take an inventory of their own resources?

If you are a working man, suppose you look yourself over. just once; take an invoice of your mental stock and see what you have. Do not accept my word; do not depend upon anybody but yourself. Think it out for yourself; and if you

do, I am quite certain that you will join the organization that represents your class (applause); the organization that has room for all your class; the organization that appeals to you to develop your own brain, to rely upon yourself and be a man among men. And that is what the working class have to do, cultivate self-reliance and think and act for themselves; and that is what they are stimulated to do in the Industrial Workers.

We have great hope and abiding faith for we know that each day will bring us increasing numbers, influence and power; and this notwithstanding all the opposition that can be arrayed against us.

We know that the principles of the Industrial Workers are right and that its ultimate triumph is assured beyond the question of a doubt; and if you believe in its conquering mission, then we ask you to be true enough to yourselves and your class to join it; and when you join it you will have a duty to perform and that duty will be to go out among the unorganized and bring them into the ranks and help in this great work of education and organization, without which the working class is doomed to continued ignorance and slavery.

Carl Marx, the profound economic philosopher, who will be known in future as the great emancipator, uttered the inspiring shibboleth a half century ago: "Workingmen of all countries unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains; you have a world to gain."

You workers are the only class essential to society; all others can be spared, but without you society would perish. You produce the wealth, you support government, you create and conserve civilization. You ought to be, can be and will be the masters of the earth. (Great applause).

Why should you be dependent upon a capitalist? Why should this capitalist own a tool he cannot use? And why should not you own the tool you have to use?

Every cog in every wheel that revolves everywhere has been made by the working class, and is set and kept in operation by the working class; and if the working class can make and operate this marvelous wealth-producing machinery, they can also develop the intelligence to make themselves the masters of this machinery (applause), and operate it not to turn out

millionaires, but to produce wealth in abundance for themselves.

You cannot afford to be contented with your lot; you have a brain to develop and a manhood to sustain. You ought to have some aspiration to be free.

Suppose you do have a job, and that you can get enough to eat and clothes enough to cover your body, and a place to sleep; you but exist upon the animal plane; your very life is suspended by a slender thread; you don't know what hour a machine may be invented to displace you, or you may offend your economic master, and your job is gone. You go to work early in the morning and you work all day; you go to your lodging at night, tired; you throw your exhausted body upon a bed of straw to recuperate enough to go back to the factory and repeat the same dull operation the next day, and the next, and so on and on to the dreary end; and in some respects you are not so well off as was the chattel slave. He had no fear of losing his job; he was not blacklisted; he had food and clothing and shelter; and now and then, seized with a desire for freedom, he tried to run away from his master. You do not try to run away from yours. He doesn't have to hire a policeman to keep an eye on you. When you run, it is in the opposite direction, when the bell rings or the whistle blows.

You are as much subject to the command of the capitalist as if you were his property under the law. You have got to go to his factory because you have got to work; he is the master of your job, and you cannot work without his consent, and he only gives this on condition that you surrender to him all you produce except what is necessary to keep you in running order.

The machine you work with has to be oiled; you have to be fed; the wage is your lubricant, it keeps you in working order, and so you toil and sweat and groan and reproduce yourself in the form of labor power, and then you pass away like a silk worm that spins its task and dies.

That is your lot in the capitalist system and you have no right to aspire to rise above the dead level of wage-slavery.

It is true that one in ten thousand may escape from his class and become a millionaire; he is the rare exception that

proves the rule. The wage-workers remain in the working class, and they never can become anything else in the capitalist system. They produce and perish, and their exploited bones mingle with the dust.

Every few years there is a panic, industrial paralysis, and hundreds of thousands of workers are flung into the streets; no work, no wages; and so they throng the highways in search of employment that cannot be found; they become vagrants, tramps, outcasts, criminals. It is in this way that the human being degenerates, and that crime graduates in the capitalist system, all the way from petty larceny to homicide.

The working millions who produce the wealth have little or nothing to show for it. There is widespread ignorance among them; industrial and social conditions prevail that defy all language properly to describe. The working class consists of a mass of human beings, men, women and children, in enforced competition with one another, in all of the circling hours of the day and night, for the sale of their labor power, and in the severity of the competition the wage sinks gradually until it touches the point of subsistence.

In this struggle more than five millions of women are engaged and about two millions of children, and the number of child laborers is steadily increasing, for in this system profit is important, while life has no value. It is not a question of male labor, or female labor, or child labor; it is simply a question of cheap labor without reference to the effect upon the working class; the woman is employed in preference to the man and the child in preference to the woman; and so we have millions of children, who, in their early, tender years, are seized in the iron clutch of capitalism, when they ought to be upon the playground, or at school; when they ought to be in the sunlight, when they ought to have wholesome food and enjoy the fresh atmosphere they are forced into the industrial dungeons and there they are riveted to the machines; they feed the insatiate monsters and become as living cogs in the revolving wheels. They are literally fed to industry to produce profits. They are dwarfed and deformed, mentally, morally and physically; they have no chance in life; they are the victims of the industrial system that the Industrial Workers is organized to abolish, in the interest, not

only of the working class, but in the higher interest of all humanity. (Applause).

If there is a crime that should bring to the callous cheek of capitalist society the crimson of shame, it is the unspeakable crime of child slavery; the millions of babes that fester in the sweat shops, are the slaves of the wheel, and cry out in their agony, but are not heard in the din and roar of our industrial infernalism.

Take that great army of workers, called coal miners, organized in a craft union that does nothing for them; that seeks to make them contented with their lot. These miners are at the very foundation of industry and without their labor every wheel would cease to revolve as if by the decree of some industrial Jehovah. (Applause). There are 600,000 of these slaves whose labor makes possible the firesides of the world, while their own loved ones shiver in the cold. I know something of the conditions under which they toil and despair and perish. I have taken time enough to descend to the depths of these pits, that Dante never saw, or he might have improved upon his masterpiece. I have stood over these slaves and I have heard the echo of their picks, which sounded to me like muffled drums throbbing funeral marches to the grave, and I have said to myself, in the capitalist system, these wretches are simply following their own hearses to the potter's field. In all of the horizon of the future there is no star that sheds a ray of hope for them.

Then I have followed them from the depths of these black holes, over to the edge of the camp, not to the home, they have no home; but to a hut that is owned by the corporation that owns them, and here I have seen the wife.—Victor Hugo once said that the wife of a slave is not a wife at all; she is simply a female that gives birth to young—I have seen this wife standing in the doorway, after trying all day long to make a ten-cent piece do the service of a half-dollar, and she was ill-humored; this could not be otherwise, for love and abject poverty do not dwell beneath the same roof. Here there is no paper upon the wall and no carpet upon the floor; there is not a picture to appeal to the eye; there is no statute to challenge the soul, no strain of inspiring music to touch and quicken what Lincoln called the better angels of human

nature. Here there is haggard poverty and want. And in this atmosphere the children of the future are being reared, many thousands of them, under conditions that make it morally certain that they will become paupers, or criminals, or both.

Man is the product, the expression of his environment. Show me a majestic tree that towers aloft, that challenges the admiration of man, or a beautiful rose-bud that, under the influence of sunshine and shower, bursts into bloom and fills the common air with its fragrance; these are possible only because the soil and climate are adapted to their growth and culture. Transfer this flower from the sunlight and the atmosphere to a cellar filled with noxious gases, and it withers and dies. The same law applies to human beings; the industrial soil and the social climate must be adapted to the development of men and women, and then society will cease producing (cry of "down with capitalism") the multiplied thousands of deformities that to-day are a rebuke to our much vaunted civilization, and, above all, an impeachment of the capitalist system. (Applause).

What is true of the miners is true in a greater or less degree of all workers in all other departments of industrial activity. This system has about fulfilled its historic mission; upon every hand there are the unerring signs of change, and the time has come for the organization of the working class to pave the way for this change. Education and organization of the working class for the social revolution (applause) that is to lift the workers from the depths of slavery and elevate them to an exalted plane of equality and fraternity. (Applause).

At the beginning of industrial society men worked with hand tools; a boy could learn a trade, make himself the master of the simple tools with which he worked, and employ himself and enjoy what he produced; but that simple tool of a century ago has become a mammoth social instrument; in a word, that tool has been socialized. Not only this, but production has been socialized. As small a commodity as a pin or a pen, or a match involves for its production all of the social labor of the land; but this evolution is not yet complete: the tool has been socialized, production has been social-

ized, and now ownership must also be socialized; in other words, those great social instruments that are used in modern industry for the production of wealth, those great social agencies that are socially made and socially used, must also be socially owned. (Applause).

The Industrial Workers is the only economic organization that makes this declaration, that states this fact and is organized upon this foundation, that the workers must own their tools and employ themselves. This involves a revolution, and this means the end of the capitalist system, and the rearing of a working class republic (prolonged applause), the first real republic the world has ever known; and it is coming just as certainly as I stand in your presence.

You can hasten it, or you can retard it, but you cannot prevent it.

This the working class can achieve, and if you are in that class and you do not believe it, it is because of your ignorance, it is because you got your education in the school of pure and simple unionism, or in a capitalist political party. This the working class can achieve and all that is required is that the working class shall be educated, that they shall unite, that they shall act together.

The capitalist politician and the labor lieutenant have always contrived to keep the working class divided, upon the economic field and upon the political field; and the workers have made no progress, and never will until they desert those false leaders and unite beneath the revolutionary standard of the Industrial Workers of the World. (Applause).

The capitalists have the mills and the tools and the dollars, but you are an overwhelming majority; you have the men, you have the votes. There are not enough of them to continue this system an instant; it can only be continued by your consent and with your approval, and to the extent that you give it you are responsible for your slavery; and if you have your eyes opened, if you understand where you properly belong, it is still a fortunate thing for you that you cannot do anything for yourself until you have opened the eyes of those that are yet in darkness. (Applause).

Now, there are many workers who have had their eyes opened and they are giving their time and energy to the revo-

lutionary education of the working class (applause), and every day sees our minority increasing, and it is but a question of time until this minority will be converted into the triumphant majority (applause); and so we wait and watch and work in all of the circling hours of the day and night.

We have just begun here in New York, and with a vim and an energy unknown in the circles of unionism. In six months from this night you will find that there is a very formidable organization of Industrial Workers in New York (applause); and if you are a working man and you have convictions of your own, then it is your duty to join this union and take your place where you belong.

Don't hesitate because somebody else is falling back. Don't wait because somebody else is not yet ready. Act and act now and for yourself; and if you happen to be the only Industrial Worker in your shop, or in your immediate vicinity, you are simply monumental of the ignorance of your fellow-workers, and you have got to begin to educate them. For a little while they may point you out with the finger of contempt, but you can stand this, you can bear it with patience; if they persecute you, because you are true to yourself, your latent powers will be developed, you will become stronger than you now dream, and then you will do the deeds that live and you will write your name where it will stay.

Never mind what others may say, or think, or do. Stand erect in the majesty of your manhood.

Listen for just once to the throbbing of your own heart, and you will hear that it is beating quick-step marches to Camp Freedom.

Stand erect! Lift your bowed form from the earth! The dust has long enough borne the impress of your knees.

Stand up and see how long a shadow you cast in the sunlight! (Applause). Hold up your head and avow your convictions, and then accept, as becomes a man, the consequences of your acts!

We need you and you need us. We have got to have the workers united, and you have got to help us in the work. And so we make our appeal to you to-night, and we know that you will not fail. You can arrive at no other conclusion; you are bound to join the industrial workers, and be-

come a missionary in the field of industrial unionism. You will then feel the ecstacy of a new-born aspiration. You will do your very best. You will wear the badge of the Industrial Workers, and you will wear it with pride and joy.

The very contempt that it invites will be a compliment to you; in truth, a tribute to your manhood.

Go out into the field and bring in the rest of the workers, that they may be fully equipped for their great mission. We will wrest what we can, step by step, from the capitalists, but with our eye fixed upon the goal; we will press forward, keeping step together with the inspiring music of the new emancipation; and when we have enough of this kind of organization, as Brother De Leon said so happily the other day (applause), when we are lined up in battle array, and the capitalists try to lock us out, we will turn the tables on the gentlemen and lock them out. (Applause).

We can run the mills without them but they cannot run them without us. (Applause).

It is a very important thing to develop the economic power, to have a sound economic organization. This has been the inherent weakness in the labor movement of the United States. We need, and sorely need, a revolutionary economic organization. We must develop this kind of strength; it is the kind that we will have occasion to use in due time, and it is the kind that will not fail us when the crisis comes. So we shall organize and continue to organize the political field; and I am of those that believe that the day is near at hand when we shall have one great revolutionary economic organization of the working class and one great revolutionary political party of the working class. (Cheers and prolonged applause). Then will proceed with increased impetus the work of education and organization that will culminate in emancipation.

This great body will sweep into power and seize the reins of government; take possession of industry in the name of the working class, and it can be easily done. All that will be required will be to transfer the title from the parasites to the producers; and then the working class, in control of industry, will operate it for the benefit of all. The work day will be reduced in proportion to the progress of invention.

Every man will work, or at least have a chance to work, and get the full equivalent of what he produces. He will work, not as a slave, but as a free man, and he will express himself in his work and work with joy. Then the badge of labor will be the only badge of aristocracy. The industrial dungeon will become a temple of science. The working class will be free, and all humanity disenthralled.

The workers are the saviours of society (applause); the redeemers of the race; and when they have fulfilled their great historic mission, men and women can walk the highlands and enjoy the vision of a land without masters and without slaves, a land regenerated and resplendent in the triumph of Freedom and Civilization. (Long, continued applause).

The Preamble

OF THE

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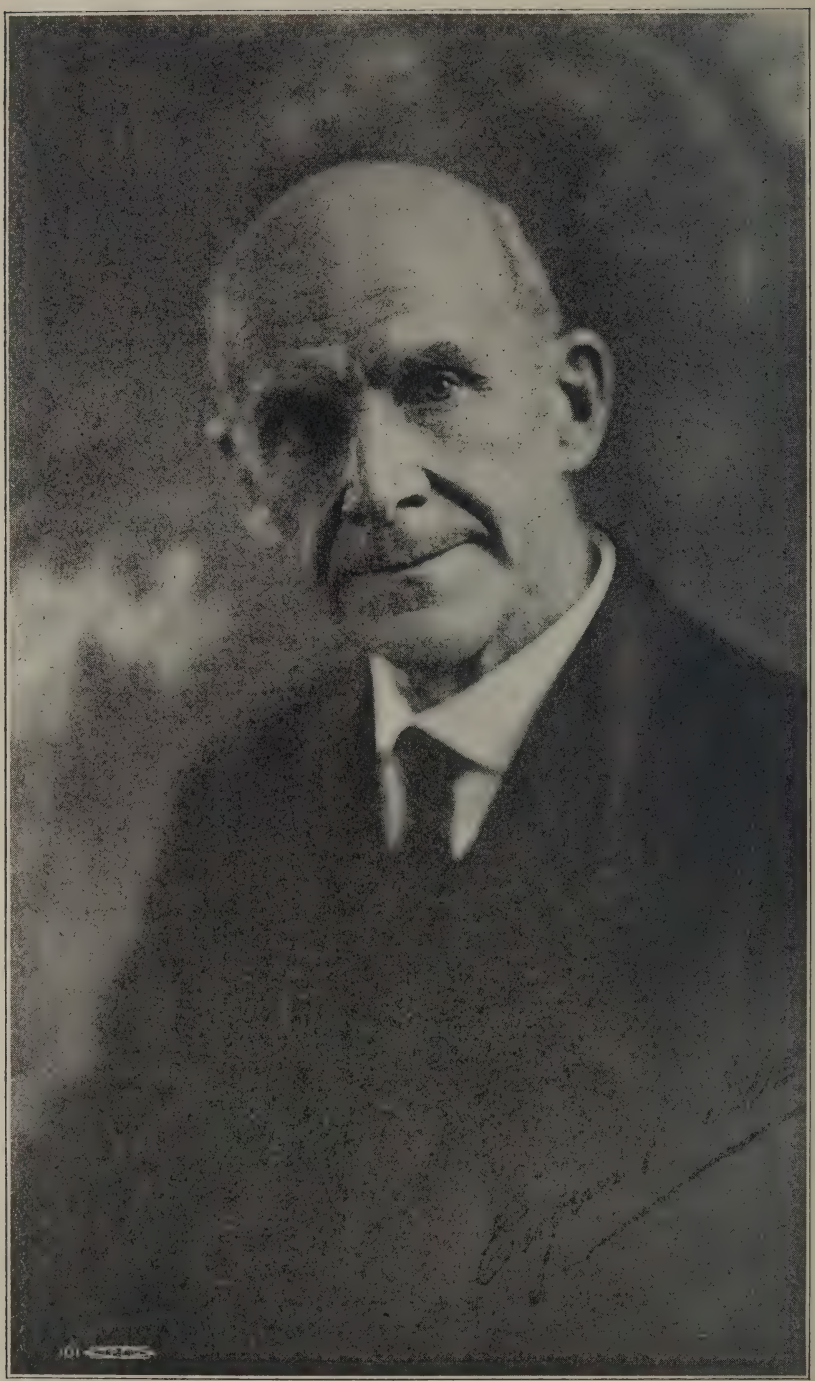
While there is a criminal element I am of it;
While there is a soul in prison I am not free.



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His Canton Speech and His Trial in the Federal Court at Cleveland, September, 1918

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EUGENE

Standing like a shaft of light,
Cloud by day and fire by night,
For the thing you think is right,
Dominating all your scene,
None may daunt you, brave Eugene!

We may bind and make you mute,
We may stripe you in the suit
Of the meanest felon. Aye,
We may scourge and crucify,
But your soul, sublime, serene,
Who can crucify, Eugene?

Nay, I am not of your Cause.
I hold firm we dare not pause,
Till we sear the fangs and claws
Of the Beast, that Devil's own,
Squatting on the Potsdam throne.

Yet, altho' I flout your clan,
Tho' I disbelieve your plan,
Answer me who will or can;—
Who out-mans you as a Man?
Humble, homely, lank and lean,
Heart unveiled and conscience clean,
Kindly-minded, clear and keen;
Pomp and Pilates seem but mean
Shadowed by your soul, Eugene.

—Edmund Vance Cooke.

(This poem was inspired by the speech of Debs before the jury in his trial in the Federal Court at Cleveland in 1918.)

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CANTON SPEECH

FOREWORD

On June 16th, 1918, Eugene V. Debs delivered a speech at Canton, Ohio, for which he served nearly three years of a sentence of ten years in the Federal Prison at Atlanta, Georgia. He was released from prison Christmas day, 1921.

The speech as published in this pamphlet is taken from the court records and is identical with the version submitted in evidence by the Government and upon which Comrade Debs' conviction and sentence were based.

Comrade Debs is a rapid speaker and it is evident that the reporter was unable to take his delivery and that many words, and in some instances whole sentences, have been omitted.

Comrade Debs has agreed to its publication in this form and states now, as he did at the time of the trial, that, barring the errors and omissions mentioned, it is substantially what he said at Canton.

We submit it to the candid judgment of his fellow-citizens.

We do not believe they will find in it justification for either his conviction or his imprisonment.

On the contrary we believe a calm and dispassionate reading will convince even the most prejudiced, that a great injustice was done and that the present administration should remedy this injustice, so far as it is possible to do so, by the immediate restoration of his citizenship which was taken away by his imprisonment and has not been restored.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY,
Bertha Hale White, Executive Secretary.

SPEECH

DELIVERED BY EUGENE V. DEBS

At Nimisilla Park, Canton, Ohio

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 16th, 1918

CHAIRMAN MARGUERITE PREVEY—Introducing Mr. Debs—Comrades: It is a great privilege to be a Socialist in this year 1918. We not only have the privilege of being a Socialist here this afternoon, but we are going to have the privilege of listening again to one of the ablest and most fearless orators that ever stepped on a public platform. (Applause.) A man that is best loved and most hated of all men in the United States today. (Applause.) A man whom the capitalist newspapers endeavored to represent as being a renegade in the Socialist movement over a headline: "Debs & Company desert the program of the Socialist Party." Others may desert, but Eugene V. Debs never deserts the Socialist party. (Applause).

He needs no introduction to you, comrades and friends, this afternoon. But I have the very great privilege and the honor of presenting him to you once more at this very critical time in the Socialist movement, when we most need him—Eugene V. Debs. (Mr. Debs steps to the front of the platform amid great and prolonged applause and cheers.)

MR. DEBS: Comrades, friends and fellow-workers, for this very cordial greeting, this very hearty reception, I thank you all with the fullest appreciation of your interest in and your devotion to the cause for which I am to speak to you this afternoon. (Applause.)

To speak for labor; to plead the cause of the men and women and children who toil; to serve the working class, has always been to me a high privilege; (Applause) a duty of love.

I have just returned from a visit over yonder (pointing to the workhouse) (Laughter), where three of our most loyal comrades (Applause) are paying the penalty for their devotion to the cause of the working class. (Applause.) They have come to realize, as many of us have, that it is extremely dangerous to exercise the constitutional right of free speech in a country fighting to make democracy safe in the world. (Applause.)

I realize that, in speaking to you this afternoon, there are certain limitations placed upon the right of free speech. I must be exceedingly careful, prudent, as to what I say, and even more careful and prudent as to how I say it. (Laughter.) I may not be able to say all I think; (Laughter and applause) but I am not going to say anything that I do not think. (Applause.) I would rather a thousand times be a free soul in jail than to be a sycophant and coward in the streets. (Applause and shouts.) They may put those boys in jail—and some of the rest of us in jail—but they can not put the Socialist movement in jail. (Applause and shouts). Those prison bars separate their bodies from ours, but their souls are here this afternoon. (Applause and cheers.) They are simply paying the penalty that all men have paid in all the ages of history for standing erect, and for seeking to pave the way to better conditions for mankind. (Applause.)

If it had not been for the men and women, who, in the past, have had the moral courage to go to jail, we would still be in the jungles. (Applause.)

This assemblage is exceedingly good to look upon. I wish it were possible for me to give you what you are giving me this afternoon. (Laughter.)What I say here amounts to but little; what I see here is exceedingly important. (Applause.) You workers in Ohio, enlisted in the greatest cause ever organized in the interest of your class, are making history today in the face of threatening opposition of all kinds—history that is going to be read with profound interest by coming generations. (Applause.)

There is but one thing you have to be concerned about, and that is that you keep four-square with the principles of the international Socialist movement. (Applause.) It is only when you begin to compromise that trouble begins. (Applause). So far as I am concerned, it does not matter what others may say, or think, or do, as long as I am sure that I am right with myself and the cause. (Applause.) There are so many who seek refuge in the popular side of a great question. As a Socialist, I have long since learned how to stand alone. (Applause.)

For the last month I have been traveling over the Hoosier State; and, let me say to you, that, in all my connection with the Socialist movement, I have never seen such meetings, such enthusiasm, such unity of purpose; never have I seen such a promising outlook as there is today, notwithstanding the statement published repeatedly that our leaders have deserted us. (Laughter.) Well, for myself, I never had much faith in leaders. (Applause and laughter.) I am willing to be charged with almost anything, rather than to be charged with being a leader. I am suspicious of leaders, and especially of the intellectual variety. (Applause.) Give me the rank and file every day in the week. If you go to the City of Washington, and you examine the pages of the Congressional Directory, you will find that almost all of those cor-

poration lawyers and cowardly politicians, members of Congress, and misrepresentatives of the masses—you will find that almost all of them claim, in glowing terms, that they have risen from the ranks to places of eminence and distinction. I am very glad I can not make that claim for myself. (Laughter.) I would be ashamed to admit that I had risen from the ranks. When I rise it will be with the ranks, and not from the ranks. (Applause.)

When I came away from Indiana, the comrades said: "When you cross the line and get over into the Buckeye State, tell the comrades there that we are on duty and doing duty. Give them for us, a hearty geeting, and tell them that we are going to make a record this fall that will be read around the world." (Applause.)

The Socialists of Ohio, it appears, are very much alive this year. The party has been killed recently, (Laughter) which, no doubt, accounts for its extraordinary activity. (Laughter.) There is nothing that helps the Socialist party so much as receiving an occasional death blow. (Laughter and cheers.) The oftener it is killed the more active, the more energetic, the more powerful it becomes.

They who have been reading the capitalist newspapers realize what a capacity they have for lying. We have been reading them lately. They know all about the Socialist party—the Socialist movement, except what is true. (Laughter.) Only the other day they took an article that I had written—and most of you have read it—most of you members of the party, at least—and they made it appear that I had undergone a marvelous transformation. (Laughter.) I had suddenly become changed—had in fact come to my senses; I had ceased to be a wicked Socialist, and had become a respectable Socialist, (Laughter) a patriotic Socialist—as if I had ever been anything else. (Laughter.)

What was the purpose of this deliberate misrepresentation? It is so self-evident that it suggests itself. The purpose was to sow the seeds of dissension in our ranks; to have it appear that we were divided among ourselves; that we were pitted against each other, to our mutual undoing. But Socialists were not born yesterday. (Applause.) They know how to read capitalist newspapers; (Laughter and applause) and to believe exactly the opposite of what they read. (Applause and laughter.)

Why should a Socialist be discouraged on the eve of the greatest triumph in all the history of the Socialist movement? (Applause.) It is true that these are anxious, trying days for us all—testing days for the women and men who are upholding the banner of labor in the struggle of the working class of all the world against the exploiters of all the world; (Applause) a time in which the weak and cowardly will falter and fail and desert. They lack the fibre to endure the revolutionary test; they fall away; they disappear as if they had never been. On the other hand, they who are animated by the unconquerable spirit of the Social revolution; they who have the moral courage to stand erect and assert

their convictions; stand by them; fight for them; go to jail or to hell for them, if need be—(Applause and shouts) they are writing their names, in this crucial hour—they are writing their names in fadeless letters in the history of mankind. (Applause.)

Those boys over yonder—those comrades of ours—and how I love them! Aye, they are my younger brothers; (Laughter and applause) their very names throb in my heart, thrill in my veins, and surge in my soul. (Applause.) I am proud of them; they are there for us; (Applause) and we are here for them. (Applause, shouts and cheers). Their lips, though temporarily mute, are more eloquent than ever before; and their voice, though silent, is heard around the world. (Great applause.)

Are we opposed to Prussian militarism? (Laughter.) (Shouts from the crowd of "Yes. Yes.") Why, we have been fighting it since the day the Socialist movement was born; (Applause) and we are going to continue to fight it, day and night, until it is wiped from the face of the earth. (Thunderous applause and cheers.) Between us there is no truce—no compromise.

But, before I proceed along this line, let me recall a little history, in which I think we are all interested.

In 1869 that grand old warrior of the Social revolution, the elder Liebknecht, was arrested and sentenced to prison for three months, because of his war, as a Socialist, on the Kaiser and on the junkers that rule Germany. In the meantime the Franco-Prussian war broke out. Liebknecht and Bebel were the Socialist members in the Reichstag. They were the only two who had the courage to protest against taking Alsace-Lorraine from France and annexing it to Germany. And for this they were sentenced two years to a prison fortress charged with high treason; because, even in that early day, almost fifty years ago, these leaders, these forerunners of the international Socialist movement were fighting the Kaiser and fighting the junkers of Germany. (Great applause and cheers.) They have continued to fight them from that day to this. (Applause.) Multiplied thousands of Socialists have languished in the jails of Germany because of their heroic warfare upon the despotic ruling class of that country. (Applause.)

Let us come down the line a little farther. You remember that, at the close of Theodore Roosevelt's second term as President, he went over to Africa (Laughter) to make war on some of his ancestors. (Laughter, continued shouts, cheers, laughter and applause.) You remember that, at the close of his expedition, he visited the capitals of Europe; and that he was wined and dined, dignified and glorified by all the Kaisers and Czars and Emperors of the Old World. (Applause.) He visited Potsdam while the Kaiser was there; and, according to the accounts published in the American newspapers, he and the Kaiser were soon on the most familiar terms. (Laughter.) They were hilariously intimate with each other, and slapped each other on the back. (Laughter.) After Roosevelt had reviewed the Kaiser's troops, according to the same

accounts, he became enthusiastic over the Kaiser's legions and said: "If I had that kind of an army, I could conquer the world." (Laughter.) He knew the Kaiser then just as well as he knows him now. (Laughter.) He knew that he was the Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin. And yet, he permitted himself to be entertained by that Beast of Berlin; (Applause) had his feet under the mahogany of the Beast of Berlin; was cheek by jowl with the Beast of Berlin. (Applause.) And, while Roosevelt was being entertained royally by the German Kaiser, that same Kaiser was putting the leaders of the Socialist party in jail for fighting the Kaiser and the junkers of Germany. (Applause.) Roosevelt was the guest of honor in the white house of the Kaiser, while the Socialists were in the jails of the Kaiser for fighting the Kaiser. (Applause.) Who then was fighting for democracy? Roosevelt? (Shouts of "no.") Roosevelt, who was honored by the Kaiser, or the Socialists who were in jail by order of the Kaiser? (Applause).

"Birds of a feather flock together." (Laughter.)

When the newspapers reported that Kaiser Wilhelm and Ex-President Theodore recognized each other at sight, were perfectly intimate with each other at the first touch, they made the admission that is fatal to the claim of Theodore Roosevelt, that he is the friend of the common people and the champion of Democracy; they admitted that they were kith and kin; that they were very much alike; that their ideas and ideals were about the same. If Theodore Roosevelt is the great champion of Democracy, (Laughter)—the arch foe of autocracy, (Laughter) what business had he as the guest of honor of the Prussian Kaiser? And when he met the Kaiser, and did honor to the Kaiser, under the terms imputed to him, wasn't it pretty strong proof that he himself was a Kaiser at heart? (Applause.) Now, after being the guest of Emperor Wilhelm, the Beast of Berlin, he comes back to this country, and wants you to send ten million men over there to kill the Kaiser; (Applause and laughter) to murder his former friend and pal. (Laughter.) Rather queer, isn't it? And yet, he is the patriot, and we are the traitors. (Applause.) I challenge you to find a Socialist anywhere on the face of the earth who was ever the guest of the Beast of Berlin, (Applause) except as an inmate of his prison—the elder Liebknecht and the younger Liebknecht, the heroic son of his immortal sire.

A little more history along the same line. In 1902 Prince Henry paid a visit to this country. Do you remember him? (Laughter.) I do, exceedingly well. Prince Henry is the brother of Emperor Wilhelm. Prince Henry is another Beast of Berlin, an autocrat, an aristocrat, a junker of junkers—very much despised by our American patriots. He came over here in 1902 as the representative of Kaiser Wilhelm; he was received by Congress and by several State legislatures—among others, by the State legislature of Massachusetts, then in session. He was invited there by the capitalist captains of that so-called commonwealth. And

when Prince Henry arrived, there was one member of that body who kept his self-respect, put on his hat, and as Henry, the Prince, walked in, that member of the body walked out. And that was James F. Carey, the Socialist member of that body. (Applause.) All the rest—all the rest of the representatives in the Massachusetts legislature—all, all of them—joined in doing honor, in the most servile spirit, to the high representative of the autocracy of Europe. And the only man, who left that body, was a Socialist. And yet, (Applause) and yet they have the hardihood to claim that they are fighting autocracy and that we are in the service of the German government. (Applause.)

A little more history along the same line. I have a distinct recollection of it. It occurred fifteen years ago when Prince Henry came here. All of our plutocracy, all of the wealthy representatives living along Fifth avenue—all, all of them—threw their palace doors wide open and received Prince Henry with open arms. But they were not satisfied with this; they got down and grovelled in the dust at his feet. Our plutocracy—women and men alike—vied with each other to lick the boots of Prince Henry, the brother and representative of the "Beast of Berlin." (Applause.) And still our plutocracy, our junkers, would have us believe that all the junkers are confined to Germany. It is precisely because we refuse to believe this that they brand us as disloyalists. They want our eyes focused on the junkers in Berlin so that we will not see those within our own borders.

I hate, I loathe, I despise junkers and junkerdom. I have no earthly use for the junkers of Germany, and not one particle more use for the junkers in the United States. (Thunderous applause and cheers.)

They tell us that we live in a great free republic; that our institutions are democratic; that we are a free and self-governing people. (Laughter) This is too much, even for a joke. (Laughter) But it is not a subject for levity; it is an exceedingly serious matter.

To whom do the Wall Street junkers in our country marry their daughters? After they have wrung their countless millions from your sweat, your agony and your life's blood, in a time of war as in a time of peace, they invest these untold millions in the purchase of titles of broken-down aristocrats, such as princes, dukes, counts and other parasites and no-accounts. (Laughter) Would they be satisfied to wed their daughters to honest workingmen? (Shouts from the crowd, "No!") To real democrats? Oh, no! They scour the markets of Europe for vampires who are titled and nothing else. (Laughter) And they swap their millions for the titles, so that matrimony with them becomes literally a matter of money. (Laughter.)

These are the gentry who are today wrapped up in the American flag, who shout their claim from the housetops that they are the only patriots, and who have their magnifying glasses in hand,

scanning the country for evidence of disloyalty, eager to apply the brand of treason to the men who dare to even whisper their opposition to junker rule in the United States. No wonder Sam Johnson declared that "patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel." He must have had this Wall Street gentry in mind, or at least their prototypes, for in every age it has been the tyrant, the oppressor and the exploiter who has wrapped himself in the cloak of patriotism, or religion, or both to deceive and overawe the people. (Applause)

They would have you believe that the Socialist party consists in the main of disloyalists and traitors. It is true in a sense not at all to their discredit. We frankly admit that we *are* disloyalists and traitors to the real traitors of this nation; (Applause) to the gang that on the Pacific coast are trying to hang Tom Mooney and Warren Billings in spite of their well-known innocence and the protest of practically the whole civilized world. (Applause, shouts and cheers).

I know Tom Mooney intimately—as if he were my own brother. He is an absolutely honest man. (Applause) He had no more to do with the crime with which he was charged and for which he was convicted than I had. (Applause) And if he ought to go to the gallows, so ought I. If he is guilty every man who belongs to a labor organization or to the Socialist party is likewise guilty.

What is Tom Mooney guilty of? I will tell you. I am familiar with his record. For years he has been fighting bravely and without compromise the battles of the working class out on the Pacific coast. He refused to be bribed and he could not be browbeaten. In spite of all attempts to intimidate him he continued loyally in the service of the organized workers, and for this he became a marked man. The henchmen of the powerful and corrupt corporations, concluding finally that he could not be bought or bribed or bullied, decided he must therefore be murdered. That is why Tom Mooney is today a life prisoner, and why he would have been hanged as a felon long ago but for the world-wide protest of the working class. (Applause)

Let us review another bit of history. You remember Francis J. Heney, special investigator of the state of California, who was shot down in cold blood in the court room in San Francisco. You remember that dastardly crime, do you not? The United Railways, consisting of a lot of plutocrats and high-binders represented by the Chamber of Commerce, absolutely control the city of San Francisco. The city was and is their private reservation. Their will is the supreme law. Take your stand against them and question their authority, and you are doomed. They do not hesitate a moment to plot murder or any other crime to perpetuate their corrupt and enslaving regime. Tom Mooney was the chief representative of the working class they could not control. (Ap-

plause) They own the railways; they control the great industries; they are the industrial masters and the political rulers of the people. From their decision there is no appeal. They are the autocrats of the Pacific coast—as cruel and infamous as any that ever ruled in Germany or any other country in the old world. (Applause) When their rule became so corrupt that at last a grand jury indicted them and they were placed on trial, and Francis J. Heney was selected to assist in their prosecution, this gang, represented by the Chamber of Commerce; this gang of plutocrats, autocrats and high-binders, hired an assassin to shoot Heney down in the court room. Heney, however, happened to live through it. But that was not their fault. The same indentical gang that hired the murderer to kill Heney also hired false witnesses to swear away the life of Tom Mooney and, foiled in that, they have kept him in a foul prison-hole ever since. (Applause)

Every solitary one of these aristocratic conspirators and would-be murderers claims to be an arch-patriot; every one of them insists that the war is being waged to make the world safe for democracy. What humbug! What rot! What false pretense! These autocrats, these tyrants, these red-handed robbers and murders, the "patriots," while the men who have the courage to stand face to face with them, speak the truth, and fight for their exploited victims—they are the disloyalists and traitors. If this be true, I want to take my place side by side with the traitors in this fight. (Great applause)

The other day they sentenced Kate Richards O'Hare to the penitentiary for five years. Think of sentencing a woman to the penitentiary simply for talking. (Laughter) The United States, under plutocratic rule, is the only country that would send a woman to prison for five years for exercising the right of free speech. (Applause) If this be treason, let them make the most of it. (Applause)

Let me review a bit of history in connection with this case. I have known Kate Richards O'Hare intimately for twenty years. I am familiar with her public record. Personally I know her as if she were my own sister. All who know Mrs. O'Hare know her to be a woman of unquestioned integrity. (Applause) And they also know that she is a woman of unimpeachable loyalty to the Socialist movement. (Applause) When she went out into North Dakota to make her speech, followed by plain clothes men in the service of the Government intent upon effecting her arrest and securing her prosecution and conviction—when she went out there, it was with the full knowledge on her part that sooner or later these detectives would accomplish their purpose. She made her speech, and that speech was deliberately misrepresented for the purpose of securing her conviction. The only testimony against her was that of a hired witness. And when the farmers, the men and women who were in the audience she addressed—when they went

to Bismarck where the trial was held to testify in her favor, to swear that she had not used the language she was charged with having used, the judge refused to allow them to go upon the stand. This would seem incredible to me if I had not had some experience of my own with federal courts.

Who appoints our federal judges? The people? In all the history of the country, the working class have never named a federal judge. There are 121 of these judges and every solitary one holds his position, his tenure, through the influence and power of corporate capital. The corporations and trusts dictate their appointment. And when they go to the bench, they go, not to serve the people, but to serve the interests that place them and keep them where they are.

Why, the other day, by a vote of five to four—a kind of craps game—(Laughter) come seven, come 'leven—(Laughter) they declared the child labor law unconstitutional —a law secured after twenty years of education and agitation on the part of all kinds of people. And yet, by a majority of one, the supreme court, a body of corporation lawyers, with just one exception, wiped that law from the statute books, and this in our so-called Democracy, so that we may continue to grind the flesh and blood and bones of puny little children into profits for the junkers of Wall Street. (Applause) And this in a country that boasts of fighting to make the world safe for democracy! (Laughter) The history of this country is being written in the blood of the childhood the industrial lords have murdered.

These are not palatable truths to them. They do not like to hear them; and what is more they do not want you to hear them. And that is why they brand us as undesirable citizens, (Laughter and applause) and as disloyalists and traitors. If we were actual traitors—traitors to the people and to their welfare and progress, we would be regarded as eminently respectable citizens of the republic; we would hold high office, have princely incomes, and ride in limousines; and we would be pointed out as the elect who had succeeded in life in honorable pursuit, and worthy of emulation by the youth of the land. It is precisely because we are disloyal to the traitors that we are loyal to the people of this nation. (Applause)

Scott Nearing! You have heard of Scott Nearing. (Applause) He is the greatest teacher in the United States. (Applause) He was in the University of Pennsylvania until the Board of Trustees, consisting of great capitalists, captains of industry, found that he was teaching sound economics to the students in his classes. This sealed his fate in that institution. They sneeringly charged—just as the same usurers, money-changers, pharisees, hypocrites charged the Judean Carpenter some twenty centuries ago—that he was a false teacher and that he was stirring up the people.

The Man of Galilee, the Carpenter, the workingman who be-

came the revolutionary agitator of his day soon found himself to be an undersirable citizen in the eyes of the ruling knaves and they had him crucified. And now their lineal descendants say of Scott Nearing, "He is preaching false economics. We cannot crucify him as we did his elder brother but we can deprive him of employment and so cut off his income and starve him to death or into submission. (Applause) We will not only discharge him but place his name upon the blacklist and make it impossible for him to earn a living. He is a dangerous man for he is teaching the truth and opening the eyes of the people." And the truth, oh, the truth has always been unpalatable and intolerable to the class who live out of the sweat and misery of the working class. (Applause)

Max Eastman (Applause) has been indicted and his paper suppressed, just as the papers with which I have been connected have all been suppressed. What a wonderful compliment they pay us! (Laughter and applause) They are afraid that we may mislead and contaminate you. You are their wards; they are your guardians and they know what is best for you to read and hear and know. (Laughter) They are bound to see to it that our vicious doctrines do not reach your ears. And so in our great Democracy, under our free institutions, they flatter our press by suppression; and they ignorantly imagine that they have silenced revolutionary propaganda in the United States. What an awful mistake they make for our benefit! As a matter of justice to them we should respond with resolutions of thanks and gratitude. Thousands of people who had never before heard of our papers are now inquiring for and insisting upon seeing them. They have succeeded only in arousing curiosity in our literature and propaganda. And woe to him who reads Socialist literature from curiosity! He is surely a "goner". (Applause) I have known of a thousand experiments but never one that failed.

John M. Work! You know John, now on the editorial staff of the Milwaukee Leader! When I first knew him he was a lawyer out in Iowa. The capitalists out there became alarmed because of the rapid growth of the Socialist movement. So they said: "We have to find some able fellow to fight this menace." They concluded that John Work was the man for the job and they said to him: "John, you are a bright young lawyer; you have a brilliant future before you. We want to engage you to find out all you can about Socialism and then proceed to counteract its baneful effects and check its further growth."

John at once provided himself with Socialist literature and began his study of the red menace, with the result that after he had read and digested a few volumes he was a full-fledged Socialist and has been fighting for Socialism ever since.

How stupid and short-sighted the ruling class really is! Cupidity is stone blind. It has no vision. The greedy, profit-seeking exploiter cannot see beyond the end of his nose. He can see a

chance for an "opening"; he is cunning enough to know what graft is and where it is, and how it can be secured, but vision he has none—not the slightest. He knows nothing of the great throbbing world that spreads out in all directions. He has no capacity for literature; no appreciation of art; no soul for beauty. That is the penalty the parasites pay for the violation of the laws of life. The Rockefellers are blind. Every move they make in their game of greed but hastens their own doom. Every blow they strike at the Socialist movement reacts upon themselves. Every time they strike at us, they hit themselves. It never fails. (Applause) Every time they strangle a Socialist paper they add a thousand voices proclaiming the truth of the principles of Socialism and the ideals of the Socialist movement. They help us in spite of themselves.

Socialism is a growing idea; an expanding philosophy. It is spreading over the entire face of the earth. It is as vain to resist it as it would be to arrest the sunrise on the morrow. It is coming, coming, coming all along the line. Can you not see it? If not, I advise you to consult an occulist. There is certainly something the matter with your vision. It is the mightiest movement in the history of mankind. What a privilege to serve it! I have regretted a thousand times that I can do so little for the movement that has done so much for me. (Applause) The little that I am, the little that I am hoping to be, I owe to the Socialist movement. (Applause) It has given me my ideas and ideals; my principles and convictions, and I would not exchange one of them for all of Rockefeller's blood-stained dollars. (Cheers) It has taught me how to serve—a lesson to me of priceless value. It has taught me the ecstacy in the hand-clasp of a comrade. It has enabled me to hold high communion with you, and made it possible for me to take my place side by side with you in the great struggle for the better day; to multiply myself over and over again; to thrill with a fresh born manhood; to feel life truly worth while; to open new avenues of vision; to spread out glorious vistas; to know that I am kin to all that throbs; to be class-conscious, and to realize that, regardless of nationality, race, creed, color or sex, every man, every woman who toils, who renders useful service, every member of the working class without an exception, is my comrade, my brother and sister—and that to serve them and their cause is the highest duty of my life. (Great applause)

And in their service I can feel myself expand; I can rise to the stature of a man and claim the right to a place on earth—a place where I can stand and strive to speed the day of industrial freedom and social justice.

Yes, my comrades, my heart is attuned to yours. Aye, all our hearts now throb as one great heart responsive to the battle-cry of the social revolution. Here, in this alert and inspiring assemblage (Applause) our hearts are with the Bolsheviki of Russia. (Deafening and prolonged applause) Those heroic men and women,

those unconquerable comrades have by their incomparable valor and sacrifice added fresh lustre to the fame of the international movement. Those Russian comrades of ours have made greater sacrifices, have suffered more, and have shed more heroic blood than any like number of men and women anywhere on earth; they have laid the foundation of the first real Democracy that ever drew the breath of life in this world. (Applause) And the very first act of the triumphant Russian revolution was to proclaim a state of peace with all mankind, coupled with a fervent moral appeal, not to kings, not to emperors, rulers or diplomats but to *the people* of all nations. (Applause) Here we have the very breath of Democracy, the quintessence of the dawning freedom. The Russian revolution proclaimed its glorious triumph in its ringing an inspiring appeal to *the peoples* of all the earth. In a humane and fraternal spirit new Russia, emancipated at last from the curse of the centuries, called upon all nations engaged in the frightful war, the Central Powers as well as the Allies, to send representatives to a conference to lay down terms of peace that should be just and lasting. Here was the supreme opportunity to strike the blow to make the world safe for Democracy. (Applause) Was there any response to that noble appeal that in some day to come will be written in letters of gold in the history of the world? (Applause) Was there any response whatever to that appeal for universal peace? (From the crowd, "No!") No, not the slightest attention was paid to it by the Christian nations engaged in the terrible slaughter.

It has been charged that Lenin and Trotzky and the leaders of the revolution were treacherous, that they made a traitorous peace with Germany. Let us consider that proposition briefly. At the time of the revolution Russia had been three years in the war. Under the Czar she had lost more than four million of her ill-clad, poorly-equipped, half-starved soldiers, slain outright or disabled on the field of battle. She was absolutely bankrupt. Her soldiers were mainly without arms. This was what was bequeathed to the revolution by the Czar and his regime; and for this condition Lenin and Trotzky were not responsible, nor the Bolsheviki. For this appalling state of affairs the Czar and his rotten bureaucracy were solely responsible. When the Bolsheviki came into power and went through the archives they found and exposed the secret treaties—the treaties that were made between the Czar and the French government, the British government and the Italian government, proposing, after the victory was achieved, to dismember the German Empire and destroy the Central Powers. These treaties have never been denied nor repudiated. Very little has been said about them in the American press. I have a copy of these treaties, showing that the purpose of the Allies is exactly the purpose of the Central Powers, and that is the conquest and spoliation of the weaker nations that has always been the purpose of war.

Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder. In the middle ages when the feudal lords who inhabited the castles whose towers may still be seen along the Rhine concluded to enlarge their domains, to increase their power, their prestige and their wealth they declared war upon one another. But they themselves did not go to war any more than the modern feudal lords, the barons of Wall Street go to war. (Applause) The feudal barons of the middle ages, the economic precedessors of the capitalists of our day, declared all wars. And their miserable serfs fought all the battles. The poor, ignorant serfs had been taught to revere their masters; to believe that when their masters declared war upon one another, it was their patriotic duty to fall upon one another and to cut one another's throats for the profit and glory of the lords and barons who held them in contempt. And that is war in a nutshell. The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose—especially their lives. (Applause) — Eugene Debs

They have always taught and trained you to believe it to be your patriotic duty to go to war and to have yourselves slaughtered at their command. But in all the history of the world you, the people, have never had a voice in declaring war, and strange as it certainly appears, no war by any nation in any age has ever been declared by the people.

And here let me emphasize the fact—and it cannot be repeated too often—that the working class who fight all the battles, the working class who make the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely shed their blood and furnish the corpses, have never yet had a voice in either declaring war or making peace. It is the ruling class that invariably does both. They alone declare war and they alone make peace.

"Yours not to reason why;
Yours but to do and die."

That is their motto and we object on the part of the awakening workers of this nation.

If war is right let it be declared by the people. You who have your lives to lose, you certainly above all others have the right to decide the momentous issue of war or peace. (Applause)

Rose Pastor Stokes! And when I mention her name I take off my hat. (Applause) Here we have another heroic and inspiring comrade. She had her millions of dollars at command. Did her wealth restrain her an instant? On the contrary her supreme devotion to the cause outweighed all considerations of a financial or social nature. She went out boldly to plead the cause of the working class and they rewarded her high courage with a ten years' sentence to the penitentiary. Think of it! Ten years! What atrocious crime had she committed? What frightful things had she said? Let me answer candidly. She said nothing more

than I have said here this afternoon. (Laughter) I want to admit—I want to admit without reservation that if Rose Pastor Stokes is guilty of crime, so am I. If she is guilty for the brave part she has taken in this testing time of human souls I would not be cowardly enough to plead my innocence. And if she ought to be sent to the penitentiary for ten years, so ought I without a doubt.

What did Rose Pastor Stokes say? Why, she said that a Government could not at the same time serve both the profiteers and the victims of the profiteers. Is it not true? Certainly it is and no one can successfully dispute it.

Roosevelt said a thousand times more in the very same paper, the Kansas City Star. Roosevelt said vauntingly the other day that he would be heard if he went to jail. He knows very well that he is taking no risk of going to jail. He is shrewedly laying his wires for the republican nomination in 1920 and he is an adept in making the appeal of the demagogue. He would do anything to discredit the Wilson administration that he may give himself and his party all credit. That is the only rivalry there is between the two old capitalist parties—the republican party and the democratic party—the political twins of the master class. They are not going to have any friction between them this fall. They are all patriots in this campaign, and they are going to combine to prevent the election of any disloyal Socialist. I have never heard anyone tell of any difference between these corrupt capitalist parties. Do you know of any? I certainly do not. The situation is that one is in and the other trying to break in, and that is substantially the only difference between them. (Laughter).

Rose Pastor Stokes never uttered a word she did not have a legal, constitutional right to utter. But her message to the people, the message that stirred their thoughts and opened their eyes—that must be suppressed; her voice must be silenced. And so she was promptly subjected to a mock trial and sentenced to the penitentiary for ten years. Her conviction was a foregone conclusion. The trial of a Socialist in a capitalist court is at best a farcical affair. What ghost of a chance had she in a court with a packed jury and a corporation tool on the bench? Not the least in the world. And so she goes to the penitentiary for ten years if they carry out their brutal and disgraceful program. For my part I do not think they will. In fact, I feel sure they will not. If the war were over tomorrow the prison doors would open to our people. They simply mean to silence the voice of protest during the war.

What a compliment it is to the Socialist movement to be thus persecuted for the sake of the truth! The truth alone will make the people free. (Applause) And for this reason the truth must not be permitted to reach the people. The truth has always been dangerous to the rule of the rogue, the exploiter, the robber. So the truth must be ruthlessly suppressed. That is why they are trying to destroy the Socialist movement; and every time they

strike a blow they add a thousand new voices to the hosts proclaiming that Socialism is the hope of humanity and has come to emancipate the people from their final form of servitude. (Applause)

(Here Mr. Debs is handed a drink of water.)

How good this sip of cool water from the hand of a comrade! It is as refreshing as if it were out on the desert waste. And how good it is to look into your glowing faces this afternoon! (Applause) You are really good looking (Laughter) to me, I assure you. And I am glad there are so many of you. Your tribe has increased amazingly since first I came here. (Laughter) You used to be so few and far between. A few years ago when you struck a town the first thing you had to do was to see if you could locate a Socialist; and you were pretty lucky if you struck the trail of one before you left town. If he happened to be the only one and he is still living, he is now regarded as a pioneer and pathfinder; he holds a place of honor in your esteem, and he has lodgment in the hearts of all who have come after him. It is far different now. You can hardly throw a stone in the dark without hitting a Socialist. (Laughter) They are everywhere in increasing numbers; and what marvellous changes are taking place in the people!

Some years ago I was to speak at Warren in this state. It happened to be at the time that President McKinley was assassinated. In common with all others I deplored that tragic event. There is not a Socialist who would have been guilty of that crime. We do not attack individuals. We do not seek to avenge ourselves upon those opposed to our faith. We have no fight with individuals as such. We are capable of pitying those who hate us. (Applause) We do not hate them; we know better; we would freely give them a cup of water if they needed it. (Applause) There is no room in our hearts for hate, except for the system, the social system in which it is possible for one man to amass a stupendous fortune doing nothing, while millions of others suffer and struggle and agonize and die for the bare necessities of existence. (Applause)

President McKinley, as I have said, had been assassinated. I was first to speak at Portsmouth, having been booked there some time before the assassination. Promptly the Christian ministers of Portsmouth met in special session and passed a resolution declaring that "Debs, more than any other person, was responsible for the assassination of our beloved president." (Laughter) It was due to the doctrine that Debs was preaching that this crime was committed, according to these patriotic parsons, and so this pious gentry, the followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, concluded that I must not be permitted to enter the city. And they had the mayor issue an order to that effect. I went there soon after, however. I was to speak at Warren, where President McKinley's double-cousin was postmaster. I went there and registered. I was soon afterward invited to leave the hotel. I was exceedingly

undesirable that day. I was served with notice that the hall would not be opened and that I would not be permitted to speak. I sent back word to the mayor by the only Socialist left in town—and he only remained because they did not know he was there—I sent word to the mayor that I would speak in Warren that night, according to schedule, or I would leave there in a box for the return trip. (Applause)

The Grand Army of the Republic called a special meeting and then marched to the hall in full uniform and occupied the front seats in order to silence me if my speech did not suit them. I went to the hall, however, found it open, and made my speech. There was no interruption. I told the audience frankly who was responsible for the president's assassination. I said: "As long as there is misery caused by robbery at the bottom there will be assassination at the top." (Applause) I showed them, evidently to their satisfaction, that it was their own capitalist system that was responsible; the system that had impoverished and brutalized the ancestors of the poor witless boy who had murdered the president. Yes, I made my speech that night and it was well received but when I left there I was still an "undesirable citizen."

Some years later I returned to Warren. It seemed that the whole population was out for the occasion. I was received with open arms. (Applause) I was no longer a demagogue; no longer a fanatic or an undesirable citizen. I had become exceedingly respectable simply because the Socialists had increased in numbers and Socialism had grown in influence and power. If ever I become entirely respectable I shall be quite sure that I have outlived myself. (Laughter)

It is the minorities who have made the history of this world. It is the few who have had the courage to take their places at the front; who have been true enough to themselves to speak the truth that was in them; who have dared oppose the established order of things; who have espoused the cause of the suffering, struggling poor; who have upheld without regard to personal consequences the cause of freedom and righteousness. It is they, the heroic, self-sacrificing few who have made the history of the race and who have paved the way from barbarism to civilization. The many prefer to remain upon the popular side. They lack the courage and vision to join a despised minority that stands for a principle; they have not the moral fibre that withstands, endures and finally conquers. They are to be pitied and not treated with contempt for they cannot help their cowardice. But, thank God, in every age and in every nation there have been the brave and self-reliant few, and they have been sufficient to their historic task; and we, who are here today, are under infinite obligations to them because they suffered, they sacrificed, they went to jail, they had their bones broken upon the wheel, they were burned at the stake and their ashes scattered to the winds by the hands of hate and revenge in their struggle to leave the world better for us than they found

it for themselves. We are under eternal obligations to them because of what they did and what they suffered for us and the only way we can discharge that obligation is by doing the best we can for those who are to come after us. (Applause) And this is the high purpose of every Socialist on earth. Everywhere they are animated by the same lofty principles; everywhere they have the same noble ideals; everywhere they are clasping hands across national boundry lines; everywhere they are calling one another *Comrade*, the blessed word that springs from the heart of unity and bursts into blossom upon the lips. Each passing day they are getting into closer touch all along the battle-line, waging the holy war of the working class of the world against the ruling and exploiting class of the world. They make many mistakes and they profit by them all. They encounter numerous defeats, and grow stronger through them all. They never take a backward step.

The heart of the International Socialist never beats a retreat. (Applause)

They are pressing forward, here, there and everywhere, in all the zones that girdle the globe. Everywhere these awakening workers, these class-conscious proletarians, these hardy sons and daughters of honest toil are proclaiming the glad tidings of the coming emancipation; everywhere their hearts are attuned to the most sacred cause that ever challenged men and women to action in all the history of the world. Everywhere they are moving toward democracy and the dawn; marching toward the sunrise, their faces all aglow with the light of the coming day. These are the Socialists, the most zealous and enthusiastic crusaders the world has ever known. (Applause) They are making history that will light up the horizon of coming generations, for their mission is the emancipation of the human race. They have been reviled; they have been ridiculed, persecuted, imprisoned and have suffered death, but they have been sufficient to themselves and their cause, and their final triumph is but a question of time.

Do you wish to hasten the day of victory? Join the Socialist party! Don't wait for the morrow. Join now! (Applause) Enroll your name without fear and take your place where you belong. You cannot do your duty by proxy. You have got to do it yourself and do it squarely and then as you look yourself in the face you will have no occasion to blush. You will know what it is to be a real *man* or *woman*. You will lose nothing; you will gain everything. (Applause) Not only will you lose nothing but you will find something of infinite value, and that something will be yourself. And that is your supreme need—to find yourself—to really know yourself and your purpose in life. (Applause)

You need at this time especially to know that you are fit for something better than slavery and cannon fodder. (Applause) You need to know that you were not created to work and produce and impoverish yourself to enrich an idle exploiter. You need to

Scene in the Federal Penitentiary, Atlanta, Georgia, May 29, 1920: Seymour Stedman (center), Vice-Presidential Socialist candidate, and James Oneal (right), chairman of committee, officially notifying Eugene Victor Debs of his nomination by the Socialist Party for the Presidency of the United States.

know that you have a mind to improve, a soul to develop, and a manhood to sustain.

You need to know that it is your duty to rise above the animal plane of existence. You need to know that it is for you to know something about literature and science and art. You need to know that you are verging on the edge of a great new world. You need to get in touch with your comrades and fellow-workers and to become conscious of your interests, your powers and your possibilities as a class. You need to know that you belong to the great majority of mankind. You need to know that as long as you are ignorant, as long as you are indifferent, as long as you are apathetic, unorganized and content, you will remain exactly where you are. (Applause) You will be exploited; you will be degraded, and you will have to beg for a job. You will get just enough for your slavish toil to keep you in working order, and you will be looked down upon with scorn and contempt by the very parasites that live and luxuriate out of your sweat and unpaid labor.

If you would be respected you have got to begin by respecting yourself. (Applause) Stand up squarely and look yourself in the face and see a man! Do not allow yourself to fall into the predicament of the poor fellow who, after he had heard a Socialist speech concluded that he too ought to be a Socialist. The argument he had heard was unanswerable. "Yes," he said to himself, "all the speaker said was true and I certainly ought to join the party." But after a while he allowed his ardor to cool and he soberly concluded that by joining the party he might anger his boss and lose his job. He then concluded: "I can't take the chance." That night he slept alone. There was something on his conscience and it resulted in a dreadful dream. Men always have such dreams when they betray themselves. A Socialist is free to go to bed with a clear conscience. He goes to sleep with his manhood and he awakens and walks forth in the morning with his self-respect. He is unafraid and he can look the whole world in the face. (Applause and laughter) without a tremor and without a blush. But this poor weakling who lacked the courage to do the bidding of his reason and conscience was haunted by a startling dream and at midnight he awoke in terror, bounded from his bed and exclaimed: "My God, there is nobody in this room." (Laughter) He was absolutely right. (Laughter and applause) There was nobody in that room.

How would you like to sleep in a room that had nobody in it? (Laughter) It is an awful thing to be nobody. That is certainly a state of mind to get out of, the sooner the better.

There is a great deal of hope for Baker, Ruthenberg and Wagenknecht who are in jail for their convictions; but for the fellow that is nobody there is no pardoning power. He is "in" for life. Anybody can be nobody; but it takes a man to be somebody.

To turn your back on the corrupt republican party and the

still more corrupt democratic party—the gold-dust lackeys of the ruling class (Laughter) counts for something. It counts for still more after you have stepped out of those popular and corrupt capitalist parties to join a minority party that has an ideal, that stands for a principle, and fights for a cause. (Applause) This will be the most important change you have ever made and the time will come when you will thank me for having made the suggestion. It was the day of days for me. I remember it well. It was like passing from midnight darkness to the noontide light of day. It came almost like a flash and found me ready. It must have been in such a flash that great, seething, throbbing Russia, prepared by centuries of slavery and tears and martyrdom, was transformed from a dark continent to a land of living light.

There is something splendid, something sustaining and inspiring in the prompting of the heart to be true to yourself and to the best you know, especially in a crucial hour of your life. You are in the crucible today, my Socialist comrades! You are going to be tried by fire, to what extent no one knows. If you are weak-fibred and faint-hearted you will be lost to the Socialist movement. We will have to bid you good-bye. You are not the stuff of which revolutions are made. We are sorry for you (Applause) unless you chance to be an "intellectual." The "intellectuals," many of them, are already gone. No loss on our side nor gain on the other.

I am always amused in the discussion of the "intellectual" phase of this question. It is the same old standard under which the rank and file are judged. What would become of the sheep if they had no shepherd to lead them out of the wilderness into the land of milk and honey?

Oh, yes, "I am your shepherd and ye are my mutton." (Laughter).

They would have us believe that if we had no "intellectuals" we would have no movement. They would have our party, the rank and file, controlled by the "intellectual" bosses as the republican and democratic parties are controlled. These capitalist parties are managed by "intellectual" leaders and the rank and file are sheep that follow the bellwether to the shambles.

In the republican and democratic parties you of the common herd are not expected to think. That is not only unnecessary but might lead you astray. That is what the "intellectual" leaders are for. They do the thinking and you do the voting. They ride in carriages at the front where the band plays and you tramp in the mud, bringing up the rear with great enthusiasm.

The capitalist system affects to have great regard and reward for intellect, and the capitalists give themselves full credit for having superior brains. When we have ventured to say that the time would come when the working class would rule they have bluntly answered "Never! it requires brains to rule." The workers of course have none. And they certainly try hard to prove it by

proudly supporting the political parties of their masters under whose administration they are kept in poverty and servitude.

The government is now operating its railroads for the more effective prosecution of the war. Private ownership has broken down utterly and the government has had to come to the rescue. We have always said that the people ought to own the railroads and operate them for the benefit of the people. We advocated that twenty years ago. But the capitalists and their henchmen emphatically objected. "You have got to have brains to run the railroads," they tauntingly retorted. Well, the other day McAdoo, the governor-general of the railroads under government operation, discharged all the high salaried presidents and other supernumeraries. In other words, he fired the "brains" bodily and yet all the trains have been coming and going on schedule time. Have you noticed any change for the worse since the "brains" are gone? It is a brainless system now, being operated by "hands." (Laughter) But a good deal more efficiently than it had been operated by so-called "brains" before. (Laughter) And this determines infallibly the quality of their vaunted, high-priced capitalist "brains." It is the kind you can get at a reasonable figure at the market place. They have always given themselves credit for having superior brains and given this as the reason for the supremacy of their class. It is true that they have the brains that indicates the cunning of the fox, the wolf, but as for brains denoting real intelligence and the measure of intellectual capacity they are the most woefully ignorant people on earth. Give me a hundred capitalists just as you find them here in Ohio and let me ask them a dozen simple questions about the history of their own country and I will prove to you that they are as ignorant and unlettered as any you may find in the so-called lower class. (Applause) They know little of history; they are strangers to science; they are ignorant of sociology and blind to art but they know how to exploit, how to gouge, how to rob, and do it with legal sanction. They always proceed legally for the reason that the class which has the power to rob upon a large scale has also the power to control the government and legalize their robbery. I regret that lack of time prevents me from discussing this phase of the question more at length.

They are continually talking about your patriotic duty. It is not *their* but *your* patriotic duty that they are concerned about. There is a decided difference. Their patriotic duty never takes them to the firing line or chucks them into the trenches.

And now among other things they are urging you to "cultivate" war gardens, while at the same time a government war report just issued shows that practically 52 per cent of the arable, tillable soil is held out of use by the landlords, speculators and profiteers. They themselves do not cultivate the soil. They could not if they would. Nor do they allow others to cultivate it. They keep it idle to enrich themselves, to pocket the millions of dollars of unearned

increment. Who is it that makes this land valuable while it is fenced in and kept out of use? It is the people. Who pockets this tremendous accumulation of value? The landlords. And these landlords who toil not and spin not are supreme among American "patriots."

In passing I suggest that we stop a moment to think about the term "landlord." "LANDLORD!" Lord of the Land! The Lord of the land is indeed a super-patriot. This lord who practically owns the earth tells you that we are fighting this war to make the world safe for democracy—he, who shuts out all humanity from his private domain; he who profiteers at the expense of the people who have been slain and mutilated by multiplied thousands, under pretense of being the great American patriot. It is he, this identical patriot who is in fact the arch-enemy of the people; it is he that you need to wipe from power. It is he who is a far greater menace to your liberty and your well-being than the Prussian junkers on the other side of the Atlantic ocean. (Applause)

Fifty two per cent of the land kept out of use, according to their own figures! They tell you that there is an alarming shortage of flour and that you need to produce more. They tell you further that you have got to save wheat so that more can be exported for the soldiers who are fighting on the other side, while half of your tillable soil is held out of use by the landlords and profiteers. What do you think of that?

Again, they tell you there is a coal famine now in the state of Ohio. The state of Indiana, where I live, is largely underlaid with coal. There is practically an inexhaustible supply. The coal is banked beneath our very feet. It is within touch all about us—all we can possibly use and more. And here are the miners, ready to enter the mines. Here is the machinery ready to be put into operation to increase the output to any desired capacity. And three weeks ago a national officer of the United Mine Workers issued and published a statement to the Labor Department of the United States government to the effect that the six hundred thousand coal miners in the United States at this time, when they talk about a coal famine, are not permitted to work more than half time. I have been around over Indiana for many years. I have often been in the coal fields; again and again I have seen the miners idle while at the same time there was a scarcity of coal.

They tell you that you ought to buy your coal right away; that you may freeze next winter if you do not. At the same time they charge you three prices for your coal. Oh, yes, this ought to suit you perfectly if you vote the republican or democratic ticket and believe in the private ownership of the coal mines and their operation for private profit. (Applause)

The coal mines now being privately owned, the operators want a scarcity of coal so they can boost their prices and enrich themselves accordingly. If an abundance of coal were mined there

would be lower prices and this would not suit the mine owners. Prices soar and profits increase when there is a scarcity of coal.

It is also apparent that there is collusion between the mine owners and the railroads. The mine owners declare there are no cars while the railroad men insist that there is no coal. And between them they delude, defraud and rob the people.

Let us illustrate a vital point. Here is the coal in great deposits all about us; here are the miners and the machinery of production. Why should there be a coal famine upon the one hand and an army of idle and hungry miners on the other hand? Is it not an incredibly stupid situation, an almost idiotic if not criminal state of affairs?

We Socialists say: "Take possession of the mines in the name of the people." (Applause) Set the miners at work and give every miner the equivalent of all the coal he produces. Reduce the work day in proportion to the development of productive machinery. That would at once settle the matter of a coal famine and of idle miners. But that is too simple a proposition and the people will have none of it. The time will come, however, when the people will be driven to take such action for there is no other efficient and permanent solution of the problem.

In the present system the miner, a wage-slave, gets down into a pit three or four hundred feet deep. He works hard and produces a ton of coal. But he does not own an ounce of it. That coal belongs to some mine-owning plutocrat who may be in New York or sailing the high seas in his private yacht; or he may be hobnobbing with royalty in the capitals of Europe, and that is where most of them were before the war was declared. The industrial captain, so-called, who lives in Paris, London, Vienna or some other center of gayety does not have to work to revel in luxury. He owns the mines and he might as well own the miners.

That is where you workers are and where you will remain as long as you give your support to the political parties of your masters and exploiters. You vote these miners out of a job and reduce them to corporation vassals and paupers.

We Socialists say: "Take possession of the mines; call the miner to work and return to him the equivalent of the value of his product." He can then build himself a comfortable home; live in it; enjoy it with his family. He can provide himself and his wife and children with clothes—good clothes—not shoddy; wholesome food in abundance, education for the children, and the chance to live the lives of civilized human beings, while at the same time the people will get coal at just what is costs to mine it.

Of course that would be Socialism as far as it goes. But you are not in favor of that program. It is too visionary because it is so simple and practical. So you will have to continue to wait until winter is upon you before you get your coal and then pay three prices for it because you insist upon voting a capitalist ticket and

giving your support to the present wage-slave system. The trouble with you is that you are still in a capitalist state of mind.

Lincoln said: "If you want that thing, that is the thing you want"; and you will get it to your heart's content. But some good day you will wake up and realize that a change is needed and wonder why you did not know it long before. Yes, a change is certainly needed, not merely a change of party but a change of system; a change from slavery to freedom and from despotism to democracy, wide as the world. (Applause) When this change comes at last, we shall rise from brutehood to brotherhood, and to accomplish it we have to educate and organize the workers industrially and politically, but not along the zig-zag craft lines laid down by Gompers, who through all of his career has favored the master class. You never hear the capitalist press speak of him nowadays except in praise and adulation. He has recently come into great prominence as a patriot. You never find him on the unpopular side of a great issue. He is always conservative, satisfied to leave the labor problem to be settled finally at the banqueting board with Elihu Root, Andrew Carnegie and the rest of the plutocratic civic federationists. When they drink wine and smoke scab cigars together the labor question is settled so far as they are concerned.

And while they are praising Gompers they are denouncing the I. W. W. There are few men who have the courage to say a word in favor of the I.W.W. (Applause) I have. (Applause) Let me say here that I have great respect for the I.W.W. Far greater than I have for their infamous detractors. (Applause)

Listen! There has just been published a pamphlet called "The Truth About the I.W.W." It has been issued after long and thorough investigation by five men of unquestioned standing in the capitalist world. At the head of these investigators was Professor John Graham Brooks of Harvard University, and next to him John A. Fish of the Survey of the Religious Organizations of Pittsburgh, and Mr. Bruere, the government investigator. Five of these prominent men conducted an impartial examination of the I.W.W. To quote their own words they "followed its trail." They examined into its doings beginning at Bisbee where the "patriots," the cowardly business men, the arch-criminals, made up the mob that deported twelve hundred workingman under the most brutal conditions, charging them with being members of the I.W.W. when they knew it to be false.

It is only necessary to label a man "I.W.W." to have him lynched as they did Praeger, an absolutely innocent man. He was a Socialist and bore a German name, and that was his crime. A rumor was started that he was disloyal and he was promptly seized and lynched by the cowardly mob of so-called "patriots".

War makes possible all such crimes and outrages. And war comes in spite of the people. When Wall Street says war the press says war and the pulpit promptly follows with its *Amen.* In every

age the pulpit has been on the side of the rulers and not on the side of the people. That is one reason why the preachers so fiercely denounce the I.W.W.

Take the time to read this pamphlet about the I.W.W. Don't take the word of Wall Street and its press as final. Read this report by five impartial and highly reputable men who made their investigation to know the truth, and that they might tell the truth to the American people. They declare that the I.W.W. in all its career never committed as much violence against the ruling class as the ruling class has committed against the I.W.W. (Applause)

You are not now reading any reports in the daily press about the trial at Chicago, are you? They used to publish extensive reports when the trial first began, and to prate about what they proposed to prove against the I.W.W. as a gigantic conspiracy against the Government. The trial has continued until they have exhausted all their testimony and they have not yet proven violence in a single instance. No, not one! They are utterly without incriminating testimony and yet one hundred and twelve men are in the dock after lying in jail for months without the shadow of a crime upon them save that of belonging to the I.W.W. That is enough it would seem to convict any man of any crime and send his body to prison and his soul to hell. Just whisper the name of the I.W.W. and you are branded as a disloyalist. And the reason for this is wholly to the credit of the I.W.W., for whatever may be charged against it the I.W.W. has always fought for the bottom dog. (Applause) And that is why Haywood is despised and prosecuted while Gompers is lauded and glorified by the same gang.

Now what you workers need is to organize, not along craft lines but along revolutionary industrial lines. (Applause) All of you workers in a given industry, regardless of your trade or occupation, should belong to one and the same union.

Political action and industrial action must supplement and sustain each other. You will never vote the Socialist republic into existence. You will have to lay its foundations in industrial organization. The industrial union is the forerunner of industrial democracy. In the shop where the workers are associated is where industrial democracy has its beginning. Organize according to your industries! Get together in every department of industrial service! United and acting together for the common good your power is invincible.

When you have organized industrially you will soon learn that you can manage as well as operate industry. You will soon realize that you do not need the idle masters and exploiters. They are simply parasites. They do not employ you as you imagine but you employ them to take from you what you produce, and that is how they function in industry. Yon can certainly dispense with them in that capacity. You do not need them to depend upon for your jobs. You can never be free while you work and live by their

sufferance. You must own your own tools and then you will control your own jobs, enjoy the products of your own labor and be free men instead of industrial slaves.

Organize industrially and make your organization complete. Then unite in the Socialist party. Vote as you strike and strike as you vote.

Your union and your party embrace the working class. The Socialist party expresses the interests, hopes and aspirations of the toilers of all the world.

Get your fellow-workers into the industrial union and the political party to which they rightly belong, especially this year, this historic year in which the forces of labor will assert themselves as they never have before. This is the year that calls for men and women who have the courage, the manhood and womanhood to do their duty.

Get into the Socialist party and take your place in its ranks; help to inspire the weak and strengthen the faltering, and do your share to speed the coming of the brighter and better day for us all. (Applause)

When we unite and act together on the industrial field and when we vote together on election day we shall develop the supreme power of the one class that can and will bring permanent peace to the world. We shall then have the intelligence, the courage and the power for our great task. In due time industry will be organized on a co-operative basis. We shall conquer the public power. We shall then transfer the title deeds of the railroads, the telegraph lines, the mines, mills and great industries to the people in their collective capacity; we shall take possession of all these social utilities in the name of the people. We shall then have industrial democracy. We shall be a free nation whose government is of and by and for the people.

And now for all of us to do our duty! The clarion call is ringing in our ears and we cannot falter without being convicted of treason to ourselves and to our great cause.

Do not worry over the charge of treason to your masters, but be concerned about the treason that involves yourselves. (Applause) Be true to yourself and you cannot be a traitor to any good cause on earth.

Yes, in good time we are going to sweep into power in this nation and throughout the world. We are going to destroy all enslaving and degrading capitalist institutions and re-create them as free and humanizing institutions. The world is daily changing before our eyes. The sun of capitalism is setting; the sun of Socialism is rising. It is our duty to build the new nation and the free republic. We need industrial and social builders. We Socialists are the builders of the beautiful world that is to be. We are all pledged to do our part. We are inviting—aye challenging you this afternoon in the name of your own manhood and womanhood to join us and do your part.

In due time the hour will strike and this great cause triumphant—the greatest in history—will proclaim the emancipation of the working class and the brotherhood of all mankind. (Thunderous and prolonged applause).

Planning the Socialist Party 1920 national campaign behind prison walls

DEBS' ADDRESS TO THE JURY

(On September 12th, 1918, Eugene V. Debs, one of the foremost American Socialists, was convicted of having violated the Espionage law in a spech delivered at Canton, Ohio, June 16th of that year. On September 14th, Debs was sentenced to ten years in prison.

The trial took place at Cleveland, Ohio. Debs was defended by Seymour Stedman and William A. Cunnea of Chicago, Joseph Sharts of Dayton and Morris Wolf of Cleveland. The case was tried before Federal Judge Westenhaver. At the close of the Government's case Debs refused to allow any witnesses to be put on in his defense and through his chief counsel, Stedman, announced that he would plead his own cause to the jury.

The case was appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States to test the constitutionality of those sections of the Espionage law under which the indictment was returned. Debs was given his liberty on bonds of ten thousand dollars pending final action by the higher court.

The speech to the jury and the address to the court herein printed are somewhat abridged. All those parts relative to the war have been left out. This was done because with the case pending before the Supreme Court, there was no desire to print anything that was brought into question by the appeal.

The parts of the speech to the jury and the address to the court herein given are presented to indicate the attitude of the defendant on the subject of free speech and free press and on social, economic and political questions).

May it please the court, and gentlemen of the jury:

For the first time in my life I appear before a jury in a court of law to answer to an indictment for crime. I am not a lawyer. I know little about court procedure, about the rules of evidence or legal practice. I know only that you gentlemen are to hear the evidence brought against me, that the court is to instruct you in the law, and that you are then to determine by your verdict whether I shall be branded with criminal guilt and be consigned, perhaps to the end of my life, in a felon's cell.

Gentlemen, I do not fear to face you in this hour of accusation, nor do I shrink from the consequences of my utterances or my acts. Standing before you, charged as I am with crime, I can yet look the court in the face, I can look you in the face, I can look the world in the face, for in my conscience, in my soul, there is festering no accusation of guilt.

Permit me to say in the first place that I am entirely satisfied with the court's rulings. I have no fault to find with the assistant district attorney or with the counsel for the prosecution.

I wish to admit the truth of all that has been testified to in this proceeding. I have no disposition to deny anything that is true. I would not, if I could, escape the results of an adverse verdict. I would not retract a word that I have uttered that I believe to be true to save myself from going to the penitentiary for the rest of my days.

Gentlemen, you have heard the report of my speech at Canton on June 16th, and I submit that there is not a word in that speech to warrant the charges set out in the indictment. I admit having delivered the speech. I admit the accuracy of the speech in all of its main features as reported in this proceeding.

In what I had to say there my purpose was to have the people understand something about the social system in which we live and to prepare them to change this system by perfectly peaceable and orderly means into what I, as a Socialist, conceive to be a real democracy.

From what you heard in the address of the counsel for the prosecution, you might naturally infer that I am an advocate of force and violence. It is not true. I have never advocated violence in any form. I have always believed in education, in intelligence, in enlightenment, and I have always made my appeal to the reason and to the conscience of the people.

I admit being opposed to the present social system. I am doing what little I can, and have been for many years, to bring about a change that shall do away with the rule of the great body of the people by a relatively small class and establish in this country an industrial and social democracy.

When great changes occur in history, when great principles are involved, as a rule the majority are wrong. The minority are usually right. In every age there have been a few heroic souls who have been in advance of their time, who have been misunderstood, maligned, persecuted, sometimes put to death. Long after their martyrdom monuments were erected to them and garlands woven for their graves.

This has been the tragic history of the race. In the ancient world Socrates sought to teach some new truths to the people, and they made him drink the fatal hemlock. This has been true all along the track of the ages. The men and women who have been in advance, who have had new ideas, new ideals, who have had the courage to attack the established order of things, have all had to pay the same penalty.

A century and a half ago when the American colonists were still foreign subjects; when there were a few men who had faith in the common people and their destiny, and believed that they could rule themselves without a king; in that day to question the

divine right of the king to rule was treason. If you will read Bancroft or any other American historian, you will find that a great majority of the colonists were loyal to the king and actually believed that he had a divine right to rule over them..... But there were a few men in that day who said, "We don't need a king; we can govern ourselves." And they began an agitation that has immortalized them in history.

Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Paine and their compeers were the rebels of their day. When they began to chafe under the rule of a foreign king and to sow the seed of resistance among the colonists they were opposed by the people and denounced by the press..... But they had the moral courage to be true to their convictions, to stand erect and defy all the forces of reaction and detraction; and that is why their names shine in history, and why the great respectable majority of their day sleep in forgotten graves.

At a later time there began another mighty agitation in this country. It was directed against an institution that was deemed eminently respectable in its time—the age-old, cruel and infamous institution of chattel slavery..... All the organized forces of society and all the powers of government upheld and defended chattel slavery in that day. And again the few advanced thinkers, crusaders and martyrs appeared. One of the first was Elijah Lovejoy who was murdered in cold blood at Alton, Illinois, in 1837 because he was opposed to chattel slavery—just as I am opposed to wage slavery. Today as you go up or down the Mississippi river and look up at the green hills at Alton, you see a magnificent white shaft erected there in memory of the man who was true to himself and his convictions of right and duty even unto death.

It was my good fortune to personally know Wendell Phillips. I heard the story of his cruel and cowardly persecution from his own eloquent lips just a little while before they were silenced in death.

William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Gerrit Smith, Thaddeus Stevens and other leaders of the abolition movement who were regarded as public enemies and treated accordingly, were true to their faith and stood their ground. They are all in history. You are now teaching your children to revere their memories, while all of their detractors are in oblivion.

Chattel slavery has disappeared. But we are not yet free. We are engaged today in another mighty agitation. It is as wide as the world. It means the rise of the toiling masses who are gradually becoming conscious of their interests, their power, and their mission as a class; who are organizing industrially and politically and who are slowly but surely developing the economic and political power that is to set them free. These awakening workers are still in a minority, but they have learned how to work together

to achieve their freedom, and how to be patient and abide their time.

From the beginning of the war to this day I have never by word or act been guilty of the charges embraced in this indictment. If I have criticised, if I have condemned, it is because I believed it to be my duty, and that it was my right to do so under the laws of the land. I have had ample precedents for my attitude. This country has been engaged in a number of wars and every one of them has been condemned by some of the people, among them some of the most eminent men of their time. The war of the American Revolution was violently opposed. The tory press representing the "upper classes" denounced its leaders as criminals and outlaws.

The war of 1812 was opposed and condemned by some of the most influential citizens; the Mexican war was vehemently opposed and bitterly denounced, even after the war had been declared and was in progress, by Abraham Lincoln, Charles Sumner, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay and many other well known and influential citizens. These men denounced the President, they condemned his administration while the war was being waged, and they charged in substance that the war was a crime against humanity. They were not indicted; they were not charged with treason nor tried for crime. They are honored today by all of their countrymen.

The Civil War between the states met with violent resistance and passionate condemnation. In the year 1864 the Democratic party met in national convention at Chicago and passed a resolution condemning the war as a failure. What would you say if the Socialist party were to meet in convention today and condemn the present war as a failure? You charge us with being disloyalists and traitors. Were the democrats of 1864 disloyalists and traitors because they condemned the war as a failure?

And if so, why were they not indicted and prosecuted accordingly? I believe in the constitution. Isn't it strange that we Socialists stand almost alone today in upholding and defending the constitution of the United States? The revolutionary fathers who had been oppressed under king rule understood that free speech, a free press and the right of free assemblage by the people were fundamental principles in democratic government. The very first amendment to the constitution reads:

> "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

That is perfectly plain English. It can be understood by a child. I believe the revolutionary fathers meant just what is here stated—that congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or of the right of the people to peaceably

assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of their grievances.

That is the right I exercised at Canton on the 16th day of last June; and for the exercise of that right, I now have to answer to this indictment. **I believe in the right of free speech, in war as well as in peace.** I would not, under any circumstances, gag the lips of my bitterest enemy. I would under no circumstances suppress free speech. It is far more dangerous to attempt to gag the people than to allow them to speak freely what is in their hearts.

I have told you that I am no lawyer, but it seems to me that I know enough to know that if Congress enacts any law that conflicts with this provision in the Constitution, that law is void. If the Espionage law finally stands, then the Constitution of the United States is dead. If that law is not the negation of every fundamental principle established by the Constitution, then certainly I am unable to read or to understand the English language.

Now, in the course of this proceeding you gentlemen have perhaps drawn the inference that I am Pro-German in the sense that I have sympathy with the imperial government of Germany. My father and mother were born in Alsace. They loved France with a passion that was holy. They understood the meaning of Prussianism, and they hated it with all their hearts. I did not need to be taught to hate Prussian militarism. I knew from them what a hateful, oppressive, and brutalizing thing it was and is. I cannot imagine how anyone can suspect for one moment that I could have the slightest sympathy with such a monstrous thing. I have been speaking and writing against it practically all my life. I know that the Kaiser incarnates all there is of brute force and murder.....

With every drop of blood in my veins I despise Kaiserism, and all that Kaiserism expresses and implies. My sympathy is with the struggling, suffering people everywhere. It matters not under what flag they were born, or where they live, I sympathize with them all and I would, if I could, establish a social system that would embrace them all.

Now, gentlemen of the jury, I am not going to detain you too long..... I cannot take back a word I have said. I cannot repudiate a sentence I have uttered. I stand before you guilty of having made this speech..... I do not know, I cannot tell, what your verdict may be; nor does it matter much, so far as I am concerned.

Gentlemen, I am the smallest part of this trial. I have lived long enough to realize my own personal insignificance in relation to a great issue that involves the welfare of the whole people. What you may choose to do to me will be of small consequence after all. I am not on trial here. There is an infinitely greater issue that is being tried today in this court, though you may not be conscious of it. American institutions are on trial here before

a court of American citizens. The future will render the final verdict.

And now, your honor, permit me to return my thanks for your patient consideration. And to you, gentlemen of the jury, for the kindness with which you have listened to me.

I am prepared for your verdict.

STATEMENT TO THE COURT

(After a motion for a new trial had been overruled, Debs was asked if he had anything to say before sentence was passed upon him. His statement to the court was as follows with the exception of those parts which have been omitted as stated in the preface):

Your honor, years ago I recognized my kinship with all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest of earth. I said then, and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it, while there is a criminal element I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.

I listened to all that was said in this court in support and justification of this prosecution, but my mind remains unchanged. I look upon the Espionage law as a despotic enactment in flagrant conflict with democratic principles and with the spirit of free institutions.

I have no fault to find with this court or with the trial. Everything in connection with this case has been conducted upon a dignified plane, and in a respectful and decent spirit.....

Your honor, I have stated in this court that I am opposed to the social system in which we live; that I believe in a fundamental change—but if possible by peaceable and orderly means.

Let me call your attention to the fact this morning that in the present system 5 per cent of our people own and control two-thirds of our wealth; 65 per cent of our people, embracing the working class who produce all wealth, have but 5 per cent to show for it.

Standing here this morning, I recall my boyhood. At fourteen I went to work in a railroad shop; at sixteen I was firing a freight engine on a railroad. I remember all the hardships and privations of that earlier day, and from that time until now my heart has been with the working class. I could have been in Congress long ago. I have preferred to go to prison.

In the struggle—the fierce and unceasing struggle—between the toilers and producers and their exploiters, I have tried as best I might to serve those among whom I was born, and whose lot I expect to share to the end of my days.

I am thinking this morning of the men in the mills and factories; of the men in the mines and on the railroads. I am thinking of the women who for a paltry wage are compelled to work out their barren lives; of the little children who in this system are robbed of their childhood and in their tender years are seized in

the remorseless grasp of Mammon and forced into the industrial dungeons, there to feed the monster machines while they themselves are being starved and stunted, body and soul. I see them dwarfed and diseased and their little lives broken and blasted because in this high noon of our twentieth century Christian civilization money is still so much more important than the flesh and blood of childhood. In very truth gold is god today and rules with pitiless sway in the affairs of men.

In this country—the most favored beneath the bending skies—we have vast areas of the richest and most fertile soil, material resources in inexhaustible abundance, the most marvellous productive machinery on earth, and millions of eager workers ready to apply their labor to that machinery to produce in abundance for every man, woman and child—and if there are still vast numbers of our people who are the victims of poverty and whose lives are an unceasing struggle all the way from youth to old age, until at last death comes to their rescue and stills their aching hearts and lulls these hapless victims to dreamless sleep, it is not the fault of the Almighty; it cannot be charged to nature, but it is due entirely to the outgrown social system in which we live that ought to be abolished not only in the interest of the toiling masses but in the higher interest of all humanity.

I am thinking of the children of poverty; the little girls in the textile mills of the East and in the cotton factories of the South, at work in a vitiated atmosphere, when they ought to be at play or at school, who, when they do grow up, if they live long enough, and approach the marriage state, will be unfit for it. Their nerves are worn out, their tissue is exhausted, their vitality is spent. They have been fed to industry. Their lives have been coined into gold. Their offspring are born weak and tired. That is why there are so many so-called failures in our modern life.

Your honor, the 5 per cent of our people that I have made reference to constitute the plutocratic element that absolutely rules our country. They privately own and control our common necessities. They wear no crowns; they wield no sceptres; they sit upon no thrones; and yet they are our economic masters and political rulers.

I believe, your honor, in common with all Socialists, that this nation ought to own and control its own industries. I believe, as all Socialists do, that all things that are jointly needed and used ought to be jointly owned—that industry, the basis of our social life, instead of being the private property of the few and operated for their enrichment, ought to be the common property of all, democratically administered in the interest of all.

John D. Rockefeller has today an income of sixty million dollars a year, five million dollar a month, two hundred thousand dollars a day. He does not produce a penny of it. I make no attack on

Mr. Rockefeller personally. I do not in the least dislike him. If he were in need and it were in my power to help him, I should serve him as gladly as I would any other human being. I have no quarrel with Mr. Rockefeller personally, nor with any other capitalist. I am simply opposing a social order in which it is possible for one man who does absolutely nothing that is useful, to amass a fortune of hundreds of millions of dollars, while millions of men and women who work all the days of their lives secure barely enough for a wretched existence.

This order of things cannot always endure. I have registered my protest against it. I recognize the feebleness of my effort, but, fortunately, I am not alone. There are multiplied thousands of others who, like myself, have come to realize that before we may truly enjoy the blessings of civilized life, we must reorganize society upon a mutual and co-operative basis; and to this end we have organized a great economic and political movement that spreads over the face of all the earth.

There are today upwards of sixty millions of Socialists, loyal, devoted, adherents to this cause, regardless of nationality, race, creed, color or sex. They are all making common cause. They are spreading with tireless energy the propaganda of the new social order. They are waiting, watching and working hopefully through all the hours of the day and the night. They are still in a minority. But they have learned how to be patient and to bide their time. They feel—they know, indeed,—that the time is coming, in spite of all opposition, all persecution, when this emancipating gospel will spread among all the peoples, and when this minority will become the triumphant majority and, sweeping into power, inaugurate the greatest social and economic change in history.

In that day we shall have the universal commonwealth—the harmonious co-operation of every nation with every other nation on earth.

Your honor, in a local paper yesterday there was some editorial exultation about my prospective imprisonment. I do not resent it in the least. I can understand it perfectly. In the same paper there appears an editorial that has in it a hint of the stupendous wrong to which I have been trying to call attention. (Reading)

> "A Senator of the United States receives a salary of $7,500—$45,000 for the six years for which he is elected. One of the candidates for Senator from a state adjoining Ohio is reported to have spent through his committee $150,000 to secure the nomination. For advertising he spent $35,000; for printing $30,000; for traveling expenses, $10,000 and the rest in ways known to political managers.
>
> "The theory is that public office is as open to a poor man as to a rich man. One may easily imagine, however, how slight a chance one of ordinary resources would have

in a contest against this man who was willing to spend more than three times his six years' salary merely to secure a nomination. Were these conditions to hold in every state, the Senate would soon become again what it was once held to be—a rich man's club.

"Campaign expenses have been the subject of much restrictive legislation in recent years, but it has not always reached the mark. The authors of primary reform have accomplished some of the things they set out to do, but they have not yet taken the bank roll out of politics."

Let me say here that they never will take the bank roll out of politics, in this capitalist system.

Your honor, I wish to make acknowledgment of my thanks to the counsel for the defense. They have not only served me with exceptional legal ability, but with a personal attachment and devotion of which I am deeply sensible, and which I can never forget.

Your honor, I ask no mercy and I plead for no immunity. I realize that finally the right must prevail. I never so clearly comprehended as now the great struggle between the powers of greed and exploitation on the one hand and upon the other the rising hosts of industrial freedom and social justice.

I can see the dawn of the better day for humanity. The people are awakening. In due time they will and must come to their own.

"When the mariner, sailing over tropic seas, looks for relief from his weary watch, he turns his eyes toward the southern cross, burning luridly above the tempest-vexed ocean. As the midnight approaches, the southern cross begins to bend, the whirling worlds change their places, and with starry finger-points the Almighty marks the passage of time upon the dial of the universe, and though no bell may beat the glad tidings, the lookout knows that the midnight is passing and that relief and rest are close at hand.

"Let the people everywhere take heart of hope, for the cross is bending, the midnight is passing, and joy cometh with the morning."

"He's true to God who's true to man; wherever wrong is done,
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding sun.
That wrong is also done to us, and they are slaves most base,
Whose love of right is for themselves and not for all the race."

Your honor, I thank you and I thank all of this court for the kindness and consideration shown me which I shall always remember.

I am now prepared to receive your sentence.

DEBS ON TRIAL

(Anonymous)

He stood apart in that great room,
Enveloped in the silent gloom,
While all around expectantly
The court throng waited for his plea.

With head erect, superb he stood,
Whose thoughts were for the common good,
Accused, yet not with manner cowed,
He faced, serene, the restless crowd.

He spoke, whose "base disloyalty"
Was love of all humanity.
A giant soul from whom no bars
Could shut the glim'ring of the stars.

On trial! Accused! Maligned! What for?
Because he stood opposed to war;
Because he loved mankind too well
To have them hurled into war's hell.

Not his the guilt nor his the crime,
Whose purposes were so sublime;
No, they who failed to comprehend
In public conscience stand condemned.

THE TRIAL OF EUGENE DEBS

(By Max Eastman)

At a Russian Socialist convention held in Stockholm in 1907 it was estimated that the delegates—140 of them—had spent, collectively, one hundred and thirty-eight years, three months and fifteen days in prison. They had been in exile one hundred and forty-eight years, six months and fifteen days. The length of time the convention as a whole had been active in Socialist propaganda was 942 years.

"It follows," says Trotsky in a preface to one of his books, "that the time spent in prison and exile is about one-third of the time a Social-Democrat is active." Reading that preface on my way west to attend the trial of Eugene Debs, I was struck by Trotsky's unconscious assertion that the time spent in prison is part of the time that a Socialist is "active." It is often the time that his influence is most active. And though the government may succeed in accelerating the immediate war program by imprisoning Debs, they will also accelerate the effect of his life-long service to the social revolution.

Whatever else he may be, Debs is the spiritual chief and hero of American Socialism, and I find myself in a very real perplexity in trying to report his trial on a charge of obstructing the war program. I believe that the postal authorities will recognize the necessity I am under, as a Socialist editor, of giving this news to the readers of the "Liberator". And, of course, I cannot write the news without some special appreciation of his life and character and the elevation of his motives. Yet, on the other hand, I recognize the necessity that the postal authorities are under of keeping out of circulation anything designed to obstruct the war program of the government. Therefore I assure the reader in advance, not only that I shall not quote or refer to anything that Debs said about the war, but that I shall not in any indirect way imply any such quotation or reference, or any discussion of what he said. As a Socialist, bidding a kind of temporary hail and farewell to a companion who is dear to the hearts and minds of millions of Americans—whether pro-war or anti—I write the news of his trial for Socialists.

When I slipped into the court-room at Cleveland a pretty young man in a pressed suit and a bow tie was reading Debs' speech at Canton to the jury. He was manifestly embarassed to find so much eloquence in his mouth. Debs was never younger, more spirited, more full of love and irony, than he was in that speech of June 16th.

"It appears," he was saying as I came in—and this bears no relation whatever to the grounds of his indictment—"It appears

that the Socialists of Ohio are very much alive this year. The party has been killed recently, which no doubt accounts for its extraordinary activity. (Laughter.) There is nothing that helps the Socialist party so much as receiving an occasional death blow. (Laughter and cheers.) The oftener it is killed, the more active, the more energetic, the more powerful it becomes....

"Are we opposed to Prussian militarism? (Laughter. Shouts from the crowd of 'Yes, Yes.'). Why, we have been fighting it since the day the Socialist movement was born (Applause); and we are going to continue to fight it, day and night, until it is wiped from the face of the earth. (Thunderous applause and cheers). Between us there is no truce—no compromise.

"In 1869 that grand old warrior of the Social revolution, the elder Liebknecht, was arrested and sentenced to prison for three months, because of his war, as a Socialist, on the Kaiser and on the Junkers that rule Germany. In the meantime the Franco-Prussian War broke out. Liebknect and Bebel were the Socialist members in the Reichstag. They were the only two who had the courage to protest against taking Alsace-Lorraine from France and annexing it to Germany. And for this they were sent two years to a prison fortress charged with high treason; because, even in that early day, almost fifty years ago, these leaders, these forerunners of the international Socialist movement, were fighting the Kaiser and fighting the Junkers of Germany. (Great applause and cheers). They have continued to fight them from that day to this. (Applause). Multiplied thousands of them have languished in the jails of Germany because of their heroic warfare upon the ruling class of that country. (Applause).

"Let us come down the line a little further. You remember that at the close of Theodore Roosevelt's second term as President he went over to Africa (Laughter) to make war on some of his ancestors. (Laughter—continued shouts, cheers, laughter and applause). You remember that, at the close of his expedition, he visited all the capitals of Europe, and he was wined and dined, dignified and glorified by all of the Kaisers and Czars and Emperors of the old world. (Applause) He visited Potsdam while the Kaiser was there; and, according to the accounts published in the American newspapers, he and the Kaiser were soon on the most familiar terms. (Laughter). They were hilariously intimate with each other, and slapped each other on the back. (Laughter). After Roosevelt had reviewed the Kaiser's troops, according to the same accounts, he became enthusiastic over the Kaiser's legions and said: "If I had that kind of an army I could conquer the world!" (Laughter). He knew the Kaiser then just as well as he knows him now. (Laughter). He knew that he was the Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin. And yet he permitted himself to be entertained by the Beast of Berlin (Applause); had his feet under the mahagony of the Beast of Berlin; was cheek by jowl with the Beast of Berlin. (Applause). And, while Roosevelt was

being entertained royally by the German Kaiser, that same Kaiser was putting the leaders of the Socialist party in jail for fighting the Kaiser and the Junkers of Germany. (Applause). Roosevelt was the guest of honor *in the white house of the Kaiser*, while the Socialists were in the *jails of the Kaiser* for fighting the Kaiser. (Applause). Who was fighting for Democracy? Roosevelt? (Shouts of 'No!') Roosevelt, who was honored by the Kaiser, or the Socialists, who were in jail by the order of the Kaiser? (Applause)."

There was no doubt as to the correctness of the young man's report. He had been hired by the Socialist party to take down Debs' speech, but now he was concerned to make it evident that he was respectable and favored the prosecution. He would try to express indignation by looking up with compressed lips at the jury after what he thought must be a particularly traitorous passage in Debs's speech, but the passage would not turn out very traitorous, nor he very indignant. He wore little lobes of hair down in front of his ears, and perfume, I think, on his handkerchief, and the wealth of Debs' personality shone through him as he read, so that he became in the eyes of the jury a very small speck.

Another report of the speech had been taken by an agent of the Department of Justice, but he had been too warmly interested to write down more than about half of it. The two reports were printed in parallel columns, agreeing fairly well where they collided, and they constituted the main evidence of the prosecution. Two or three newspaper reporters—now clad in khaki in spite of what they had heard—were also introduced to corroborate the general impression that Debs had made a speech at Canton, and that he had made it to a crowd. Estimates of the crowd varied from 200 to 1,500. At least he had made it out loud, and from a bandstand not decorated with a flag, and just after a reading of the Declaration of Independence. Those reporters were respectful of Debs, and they were not very happy on the stand. One of them, recounting an interview, remembered that after answering some questions very emphatically Debs had courteously added: "Now you may be right about this, and I may be wrong. I don't claim to be infallible, but that is the way I see it."

Another courteous person that came into the court-room, with some expectant mystery as to why he came, was C. E. Ruthenberg, who made the sensational run for mayor of Cleveland at the last election. He came from an Ohio work-house, where he is serving a term in prison, and he was introduced by the prosecution for the sole function of identifying the St. Louis platform and proclamation of the Socialist party. His coming there from the prison cell was designed to impress the jury, I suppose, with an idea that all Socialists ought to be in jail; but I doubt if it had that effect. His quietness, his gracious demeanor, his thin, keen, agile face—he is like a smiling hawk—seemed to testify to the absurdity of sending any of them to jail.

One other stranger, a dark young man, a professional, although

not very cute, detective was introduced by the prosecution. He recited three sentences that he had heard Debs utter at a conference of Socialist state secretaries in Chicago. After the recitation Seymour Stedman, the chief counsel for Debs, asked him to pull them out of his pocket and see if he had recited them right. He did, and he hadn't. But it didn't matter much.

Nothing matters much in these cases but the indictment. After they have dragged a man into court in the present high state of patriotic tension and announced to a jury that the government believes this man guilty of inciting a mutiny in the United States Army, of stirring up disloyalty in his countrymen, of obstructing the enlistment of soldiers, of encouraging resistance to the United States of America, and promoting the cause of the enemy—it is about all done but the verdict. If the man is in every respect a perfect crystal of conventional Americanism, and can prove it, he may get away with his liberty. But if he ever had an opinion that diverged the hair's breadth from those of his regular Republican or Democratic ancestors, all of whom fought in the Civil War, and the War of the Revolution, and the French and Indian War, his chances are small. You might think that this would make the government hesitate to sling these slanderous accusations around among thoughtful people.

In one point of view, of course, Debs' trial was but an incident in the general subordination of social impulses to military expediency. And yet this was not his first trial; the scene had been enacted before, and in times of international peace. And I could not but feel that something else was symbolized here in the contrast between this man and his judges. There was symbolized the conflict of the main trends of two ages in the world's history—the age of industrial despotism and the political apparition of democracy, and the age in which industrial despotism is overthrown and democracy exists.

The chamber of contemporary justice in Cleveland is of oak and marble, with windows two stories high and a ceiling of gold; the judge sits high up and his desk is as wide as a counter; and behind and above him the full width of the wall is filled with a splendorous painting. It is a painting of angels with beautiful bodies, and stern faces and swords of flame, guarding the tablets of stone upon which are inscribed the ten commandments of Israel—guarding them against the approach, as it seemed to me, of a lawyer, a man on the model of Elihu Root, in a business suit and a black gown, trying to read something clever out of a book... A kind of flamboyant solemnity of space in all that end of the room, and at the other end, a solid crowd of poor people, standing up, eager, their eyes shining like children's on everything that happens.....

I always want to like the judge when I go into a court-room. It is such an opportunity for human nature to be beautiful. Anyone to whom life is a sacred art must envy a judge his opportunities.

But those to whom life is sacred—even their own lives—are not so frequently elevated into that position as they used to be. Judge Westenhaver has the broad jowl and tightly gripped mouth of the dominant, magisterial man of affairs. His lips are so well clamped down at the corners that they remain taut when he speaks, keeping his aspect as stern as though he were silent. And yet his words come rather courteous-softly, and with a precise lilt that trails off through long sentences into silence and grammatical uncertainty. I do not think he is quite so magisterial as he looks. If one could break through a certain declivitous front that he has built out before his character one might discover the soul of a small-town lawyer, still privately nursing the dread that he may not prove equal to the dignity of his place. Thus, at least, I explain the hysterical violence with which he defends the externals of that dignity.

The prosecution, in opening their case with a little flavor of the Scriptures, had declared that Debs should be "judged by his own words, by his own words condemned," and Stedman at the conclusion of his opening accepted that challenge with passion. "Yes," he declared, "ye shall judge him by his own words, and not by his words only, but by his works—the works of his whole life!" A motion of applause followed—a few spontaneous hands forgetting. It was inevitable, and as a relief is was delightful. But the relief was short-lived. Rising to the stature of Caesar Augustus, His Honor extended a frightful, accusing arm, and shouted: "Arrest that man!" conveying the impression that the man was armed with a bomb and waiting five seconds while the fuse burned—"and that woman!—and arrest everybody else that you saw clapping their hands!"

It was a terrible moment, and everybody felt a little foolishly sick, the way you feel in school when some dreadful sinner is hauled up before the teacher. Especially this, because one of the sinners was Rose Pastor Stokes, who has just the steady mischievous twinkle in her eyes that is characteristic of an absolutely unregenerate pupil. The teacher was livid. I don't know but the whole court-room would have been sentenced to go to jail, or stay in at recess, or something, if it hadn't been for the tact of one Irishman, Cunnea, of counsel for the defense, who stepped forward and began to remind His Honor of the very wide distribution of the frailties of human nature!

"Are you *representing* these defendants?" said His Honor with asperity.

"I never decline to represent anybody who needs me," said Cunnea. And I don't know why it is that the Irish are always permitted to say what nobody else can hint at without getting his head bit off, but he added that he didn't want to see the judge sit up there and "play God to his fellow men," and the judge accepted the rebuke and postponed the hearing until the next day, when he might be a little less "unduly vexed." The next day he fined a few

of them a little, and admonished the rest of the roomful as to the well-known incompatibility between appreciation and the processes that prevail in a court of law.

There is a special interest in the personality of this judge, because he was compelled to listen to some remarks about himself which, if true, must have caused him some effort to resist their penetrating into his mind.

"Who appoints the Federal judges?" Debs was quoted as saying at Canton; "the people? In all of the history of the country the working class have never named a Federal judge. There are one hundred and twenty-one, and every solitary one of them holds his position, his tenure, through the influence and power of corporate capital. The corporations and trusts dictate their appointment. And when they go to the bench, they go, not to serve the people, but to serve the interests that placed them where they are."

Now that statement is not historically true of Judge Westenhaver, and of others it is not historically true—and to him it must have seemed, I suppose, merely a wanton gibe. And yet it was anything but that—it was a careless way of stating something that is quite accurately true, I think, even of Judge Westenhaver—namely, that he will in a broad way *behave* as a representative of corporate capital in a land in which corporate capital is the thing of supreme power and prestige.

Judge Westenhaver was a young lawyer in the farmertown of Martinsburg, West Virginia. He was Newton Baker's partner there, and probably owes his appointment to the Secretary of War. He could not go to college, but he aspired to be educated, to be citified, to be "correct," to pass in any company as a "man of culture and attainment"—in short, to get away as far as possible from the small-town lawyer that he was. So he came to Cleveland, came,—so it happened—as a member of the law firm that defended Tom Johnson in his fight for democracy in that city against the big corporate interests. For five of six years Westenhaver conducted this anti-trust litigation, and conducted it well. But it never satisfied his aspiration—which is only the normal human aspiration to sit high. He didn't like Tom Johnson's economic interpretation of the motives of prominent men, and he didn't like. Tom Johnson's lawless democratism. His heart wasn't in the job with his head. His heart was still trying to get away from that uncollege-bred Martinsburg lawyer, reading omnivorously the "best" literature, learning assiduously the "correct" thing, striving in the childlike way that men strive for contemporary distinction.

And with that striving still central in him—still uncertain and unsatisfied—Judge Westenhaver arrived at the Federal bench—and at the one more-than-contemporary distincion that will fall to him, the distinction of sitting at the trial of Eugene Debs. And while Debs expounded the economic interpretation both of him and of all the kind of prestige that he aspires to, while Debs gave the picture of contemporary life that is not intellectual, or cul-

tivated, or "correct," but true, he sat there wagging his head a little with an amused, attentive, patronizing smile, sure of his superior position—the one thing he has always determined to make sure of. And that very smile, and that attitude, revealed the intimate truth of the blunt thing that Debs had said about him. He *will* behave —in general and for broad practical purposes—as a representative of corporate capital, not because of any direct servitude or corruption, but spontaneously and with unconscious alacrity, because the power and prestige of corporate capital occupies the height toward which he aspires. The power and prestige of capital determine the standards of "cultivation," and decides what is "correct" and citified, and even what is "intellectual" in these unhappy times.

As to the jury—though they were more numerous, their character and probable reaction to a prophet of proletarian revolt was more simple to predict. They were about seventy-two years old, worth fifty to sixty thousand dollars, retired from business, from pleasure, and from responsibility for all troubles arising outside of their own family. An investigator for the defense computed the average age of the entire venire of 100 men; it was seventy years. Their average wealth was over $50.000. In the jury finally chosen every man was a retired farmer or a retired merchant, but one, who was a contractor still active. They were none of them native to leisure, however, but men whose faces were bitterly worn and wearied out of all sympathy with a struggle they had individually surmounted. Debs expressed their aspect better than I can.

"There is something pathetic," he said, in the little hotel room after his spech, "about dressed up faces—smug bodies. If they had been dressed in rags it would have been all right." And then with that instinctive gravitation toward something he can love, "What a contrast to turn toward the back of the court-room, and find a little group of beautiful Socialists, with stars for eyes—you can always tell them!"

Debs is the sweetest strong man in the world. He is a poet, and even more gifted of poetry in private speech than in public oratory. Every instant and incident of life is keen and sacred to him. He handles his body—and his mind, too—all the time, as though it were an extremely delicate instrument. He is present with entire spirit and concentration in every minutest motion that he makes. His tongue dwells upon a "the," or an "and," with a kind of earnest affection for the humble, that throws the whole accent of his sentences out of the conventional mould, and makes each one seem a special creation of the moment. He is tall and long-of-finger, like a New Hampshire farmer, and yet just as vivid, intense and exuberant with amiability as the French—a kind of French Yankee, the finest picture of what we would have American. And the motions of his hands and body are more beautiful, and his spirit is more beautiful, than anything that I have seen in any man of my time.

The religion of Socialism is compounded of the passions both

of fighting and of love. And Debs knows how to fight. He knows how to scourge with a vitriol tongue those characters with "face o' flint and bowels of brass," whose enormous passive greed obstructs and strangles the movement of humanity toward freedom. He knows how to fight. But that is not his genius. His genius is for love—the ancient real love, the miracle love, that utterly identifies itself with the emotions and the needs and wishes of others. That is why it is a sacrament to meet him, to have that warm rapier-like attention concentrated on you for a moment. And that is why Debs has so much greater power than many who are more astute and studious of the subtleties of politics and oratory. And that is why Debs was convicted of a crime—he was convicted because he could not open his mouth without declaring his solidarity and inward identity with his comrades who are in prison. All through the testified record of the prosecution, and all through his own speech in defense, and through his final quiet utterance before the judge condemned him, there sounded the same refrain, the same eloquence of one who suffers in his own breast the pain of everyone who suffers.

I see him sitting there before his judges, with detached emotion, but vivid intellectual attention, his head high, with high wrinkles, William Lloyd Garrison spectacles—something saint-like, infinitely undisturbed—and I am undisturbed too. I am happy. And when the clumsy-thumbed prosecutor, with his round jowl and sharp nose, is through laboring forth what he has in proof that Debs said what he said, there is a pause. Debs looks up at Stedman. Stedman looks over at the prosecutor.

"Let's see—you rest?" he says. "*We rest.*"

A kind of numb surprise affects the court. Nothing is said for a while. The prosecutor is disappointed. He is to be deprived of his sport of bulldozing witnesses for the defense. He will make up for it, however, by bulldozing the defendant later on. Finally the judge declared a recess of ten minutes, and everybody with a good seat settles to wait.

"Mr. Debs will conduct his own defense," said Stedman when the court assembled again, and he went over to the press table and sat down. The other attorneys sat down. And everybody waited, watching intently, as though for lightning. But Debs got up very deliberately, gathering some papers, and he looked in the eyes of his judge a full minute, while the room grew very still, before he began, courteously and quietly, but with that intense magnetic precision, to discuss the only question that could possibly engage his fervent interest—the question whether or not what he had said in his speech at Canton was true.

"For the first time in my life I appear before a jury in a court of law to answer to an indictment for crime. I am not a lawyer. I know little about court procedure, about the rules of evidence or legal practice. I know only that you gentlemen are to hear the evidence brought against me, that the Court is to instruct you in the law, and that you are then to determine by your verdict

whether I shall be branded with criminal guilt and be consigned, perhaps, to the end of my life in a felon's cell.

"Gentlemen, I do not fear to face you in this hour of accusation, nor do I shrink from the consequences of my utterances or my acts. Standing before you, charged as I am with crime, I can yet look the Court in the face, I can look you in the face, I can look the world in the face, for in my conscience, in my soul, there is festering no accusation of guilt.

"I wish to admit the truth of all that has been testified to in this proceeding. I have no disposition to deny anything that is true. I would not, if I could, escape the results of an adverse verdict. I would not retract a word that I have uttered that I believe to be true to save myself from going to the penitentiary for the rest of my days."

It was dark when Debs began speaking, though only two o'clock in the afternoon, and as he continued it grew steadily darker, the light of the chandelier prevailing, and the windows looking black as at night-time with gathering thunderclouds. His utterance became more clear and piercing against that impending shadow, and it made the simplicity of his faith seem almost like a portent in this time of terrible and dark events. It was as though love and the very essence of light were inspired to lead the world straight on into the black heart of storm and destruction.....

I think there can be no military objection to my quoting that part of his speech which was not pacific, but prophetic purely of Socialism, his portrayal of the broad trends of American history in the past, and its sure destiny in the future. He had been accused of "sympathy for the Bolsheviki" in Russia. He declared his sense of solidarity with them, and his knowledge that they are wantonly lied about in our newspapers, as the idealistic few who change the world have always been lied about, as Christ was lied about—and Socrates—accused and persecuted.

"A century and a half ago, when the American colonists were still foreign subjects, and when there were a few men who had faith in the common people and believed that they could rule themselves without a king, in that day to speak against the king was treason. If you read Bancroft, or any other standard historian, you will find that a great majority of the colonists believed in the king and actually believed that he had a divine right to rule over them. They had been taught to believe that to say a word against the king, to question his so-called divine right, was sinful. There were ministers who opened their bibles to prove that it was the patriotic duty of the people to loyally serve and support the king. But there were a few men in that day who said, 'We don't need a king. We can govern ourselves.' And they began an agitation that has been immortalized in history....

"The revolutionary forefathers were opposed to the form of gorvernment of their day. They were opposed to the social system of their time. Thy were denounced, they were condemned. But they had the moral courage to stand erect and defy all the storms

of detraction; and that is why they are in history, and that is why the great respectable majority of their day sleep in forgotten graves. The world does not know they ever lived.

"At a later time there began another mighty agitation in this country. It was against an institution that was deemed a very respectable one in its time, the institution of chattel slavery, that became all-powerful, that controlled the President, both branches of Congress, the Supreme Court, the press, to a very large extent the pulpit. All of the organized forces of society, all the powers of government upheld chattel slavery in that day. And again there were a few appeared. One of them was Elijah Lovejoy. Elijah Lovejoy was as much despised in his day as are the leaders of the I.W.W. in our day. Elijah Lovejoy was murdered in cold blood in Alton, Illinois, in 1837, simply because he was opposed to chattel slavery—just as I am opposed to wage slavery. When you go down the Mississippi River and look up at Alton you see a magnificent white shaft erected there in memory of a man who was true to himself and his convictions of right and duty unto death.

"It was my good fortune to personally know Wendell Phillips. I heard the story of his persecution, in part at least, from his own eloquent lips just a little while before they were silenced in death.

"William Lloyd Garrison, Gerrit Smith, Thaddeus Stevens—these leaders of the abolition movement, who were regarded as monsters of depravity, were true to their faith and stood their ground. They are all in history. You are teaching your children to revere their memories, while all of their detractors are in oblivion.

"Chattel slavery disappeared. We are not yet free. We are engaged in another mighty agitation today. It is as wide as the world. It is the rise of the toiling and producing masses, who are gradually becoming conscious of their interest, their power, as a class, who are organizing industrially and politically, who are slowly but surely developing the economic and political power that is to set them free. They are still in the minority, but they have learned how to wait and to bide their time.

"It is because I happen to be in this minority that I stand in your presence today, charged with crime. It is because I believe, as the revolutionary fathers believed in their day, that a change is due in the interests of the people, that the time has come for a better form of government, an improved system, a higher social order, a nobler humanity and a grander civilization. This minority, that is so much misunderstood and so bitterly maligned, is in alliance with the forces of evolution, and as certain as I stand before you this afternoon it is but a question of time until this minority shall become the conquering majority and inaugurate the greatest change in all the history of the World. You may hasten the change, you may retard it; you can no more prevent it than you can prevent the coming of the sunrise on the morrow."

There is something extremely simple about what is said there.

It is the kind of thing that any humble man will understand, and he will know that it must be either true or false. And that was the manner of Debs' defense to the end. He did not offer any argument upon the evidence. He did not once employ his gift of ironic confutation, which might have exposed weak points in the case of the prosecution. He did not even condescend, as his attorneys urged him, to present the outline of a legal argument upon which a juryman so disposed might rest his emotional desire to acquit him. With a very genial—and privately almost uproarious—scorn for the whole legal apparatus in which they were trying to tie up his clear-motived intelligence, he simply remained high up in the region of truth and noble feeling, where he lives, and compelled the court to come up there and listen to him or not listen at all. And they came up, and then after he stopped talking they descended again, a little tearful and uncomfortable, and carried out their business in the routine way. He chose to be sentenced as a prophet, and whatever might be done with his temporary person, to rest the essential argument of his case upon events that have not yet happened. And he chose well, for he **is** a prophet, and there is more than a chance that events will fulfill his utterance, and make him remembered not only as the most beautiful character in contemporary America, but as one of the most wise.

It is embarrassing to one who writes with a special sympathy to find events too obtrusively favoring his point of view. It is embarrassing to have to characterize the District Attorney, who got up to attack Debs before that jury as soon as he sat down. Assuming there was a single man of sensitive decency among the twelve, this District Attorney, Mr. Wertz, did all that could possibly be done to lose his case with that man. It would not have been very difficult to convict Debs after his own speech—he made it so evident that he would not take it as a personal judgment, that it would not and could not enter into his soul in the slightest degree. He did not ask the jury not to convict him, but rather assuming they would, sought to make it clear in his own words what it was they were convicting him for. But after that ungainly, greasy wolf, with a high whine through his teeth, had poured raw insults round the room for an hour, so that every one in the court from the judge to the stiff little bailiff was mortified, and his own more clever assistant squirmed in his chair with embarrassment, it became very difficult for the most patriotic jury to do their duty. I credit the prosecuting attorney with at least three of the six hours that this jury had to stay out recovering from the emotional impact of the scene they had witnessed. For as clearly as Debs symbolized in his presence the hope of evolution, this man was the mud from which it moves.

"Now I'll tell you in a nutshell the situation of this man an' all those he assumes to represent," he began. "I knew a farmer out here who had a barn an' the barn caught fire, an' he had a flock of sheep in the barn an' he got 'em out in the yard all right, but

there was one old ewe"—he pronounced it "yo"—"at the head of the flock, an' she bolted around the barn and went back by another door, and the whole flock followed her. And then he got them out again on that side, and this old yo, she bolted round an' come in again on this side. An' that's the way it goes. And if this old yo (pointing to Debs) wants to go to the penitentiary I've got no objection, but I object to his taking a whole flock of the people with him. Congress has pledged the resources of the United States to win this war, and the resources of the United States are the body of Eugene Debs just as much as the cattle and crops. Just because he's got a smattering of history, enabling him to lead after him a rabble o' half bakes like that conglomeration over there in Russia, where the American boys have had to go over there to preserve for the Russians their rights against these Bolsheviki—why—why—I tell you these doctrines lead to nothing but trouble and distraction. He says that if Kate Richards O'Hare's guilty, he's guilty—if Rose Pastor Stokes is guilty he's guilty. Here's what Rose said (grabbing a paper) and you've heard the record that she got ten years for this job..... And here's what Debs says about the Stokes woman. Let's see now what Debs says about Rosie. Here's what Debs says about Rosie. Why, they ought to be tried for treason, the whole outfit. If it had been any other country in the world but the United States they'd have faced a firing squad long ago. Internationalism, he says. I'll tell you what internationalism is. Pitch all the nations into one pot with the Socialists on top and you've got internationalism...."

So it flowed out of his mouth for an hour. And the judge adjourned the court until morning, and the jury tottered away, and we all walked over to the hotel with Debs, to enjoy the humor of the situation, and hear its enjoyable points appreciated as only one with a perfectly imperturbable spirit could appreciate them. Debs had a conference the night before the trial began with his lawyers, a legal conference for the purpose of mapping out his case, and in the course of that conference, which lasted two or three hours, the case was never once mentioned.

I asked him one day if the trial was a strain on him. "No," he said, "it doesn't rest on my mind much. You see, if I'm sent to jail it can't be for a very long time, whereas if you go it may be an important part of your life. That's why my heart has been with you boys all these months."

The next morning the judge instructed the jury—very correctly—in the law, and the defendant and his friends enjoyed a whole day of idle and happy conversation, lively with Debs' stories of Lincoln, and in the evening the jury, hardened up at last to their unwelcome task, tottered back to their seats. Cyrus H. Stoner, aged 58 years, the youngest man among them, rendered the verdict of guilty. Debs was released in custody of his attorneys and the court adjourned for a day, while the judge should take counsel

with himself, and perhaps with other persons of prestige, as to the appropriate length for the sentence.

On Saturday morning Stedman offered argument for a new trial on the ground that the prosecution had made much of the "St. Louis proclamation," which Debs had not mentioned in his speech at Canton. But Debs mentioned the St. Louis proclamation with some affection in his speech before the jury, and so the judge no doubt was justified in denying that there was ground there for a new trial.

The motion was overruled. The District Attorney moved for the imposition of sentence, and the clerk asked, "Eugene V. Debs, have you anything further to say in your behalf before the court passes sentence upon you?" Again Debs rose and walked slowly forward, and even more quietly and with less effort than before, he lifted them up to listen, while the little routine of particular and personal event suspended, to the very vital truth about the present, and the inexorable bright promise of the future, that were for him symbolized in this otherwise unimportant proceeding.

"Your Honor, years ago I recognized my kinship with all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest of earth. I said then, I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free....."

It may be expedient for the Government at war to imprison Eugene Debs. From their point of view it may seem prudent and necessary. But I wonder if there are not some among them who have qualms when it comes to such an act—in a war for liberty. I wonder if they ever sense the danger that when the war is done, they may find left only the name of what they were fighting for. Across the face of the County Court House, as the train pulls out of Cleveland, you read in great marble letters this motto: "Obedience To Law Is Liberty." And by means of just such fatuous sophisms as that, the powers that want industrial feudalism and bureaucracy perpetuated after this war ends, will get it if they can.

Federal Convict No. 9653 greets friends at Atlanta Penitentiary

At Socialist Party
National Headquarters,
Chicago, Ill.,
February 27th., 1925.

Fifty Busy and Turbulent Years

February 27th, 1875—1925

This is the red-letter day in the calendar of my life!

It marks the fiftieth anniversary of my birth in the labor movement.

At the close of the first fifty years I fare forth to begin the second with the flaming ardor and militant enthusiasm of a revolutionary crusader whose heart and soul are in the cause and who is and will forever remain a total stranger to defeat.

I enter upon the second half century of service with the resolute determination to complete it unless it first completes me. I shall bow alone to death and then only in the unconquered and unconquerable spirit of victory.

Standing here amidst my loyal and inspiring comrades at National Headquarters on this anniversary, I realize as never before the grandeur and the glory of our cause, and I consecrate myself anew to its service with every drop in my veins, every atom in my flesh, and to the very last pulsation of my heart.

This is the cause; now is the hour; supreme is the opportunity!

Give me your hands, comrades! Mine are outstretched in all directions. I never needed you nor have we ever needed each other as we do now.

Unity is the watchword; Forward the slogan; Victory the goal!

Eugene Victor Debs.

BERTHA HALE WHITE

On December 19, 1921, Bertha Hale White, as Director of the amnesty campaign at Washington, presented a petition to the President signed by more than 30,000 citizens of Terre Haute, Ind., and asked for the release of Debs as a Christmas gift to the Nation. On December 23 the President announced his decision to grant amnesty to Debs and twenty-three other politicals, many of whom were already at liberty on parole. Undoubtedly the Terre Haute petition was a decisive factor in securing the release of Debs.

The Crying Need of the Day

By Eugene V. Debs

Need I say to my comrades that the crying need of the day is ORGANIZATION?

The war almost destroyed the Socialist party in the United States. That is one of the chief aims and inevitable effects of all modern wars.

The party survived, but it was shaken to its foundations and stripped clean of everything that could not resist the shock. The test was a crucial one and the membership, though shattered, was purged and strengthened. The loyal revolutionary comrades stood true and saved the party, and now they have to rebuild it on a more secure foundation and more powerfully and staunchly than before.

And this is now the supreme duty of the hour!

Will you take hold *now*, and stick to the job, and do your part?

I appeal to you!

Go to the meeting of your local and plead the urgency of *Organization!*

If your local is weak, build it up and thereby help build the needed *Organization!*

If your local went down in the onslaught, rebuild it as another unit in the party *Organization!*

Build up the local, build up the state, build up the national party organization!

We should have a hundred thousand members again soon after the sun of the new year lights the world.

Take hold, comrades; I appeal to you, in the name of our beloved cause!

Take hold because you are a Socialist, and know your duty, and have the will and energy to perform it.

Do it and do it *now!*

Ours is the liberating movement of the ages.

It is consecrated to the cause of the oppressed.

It bears the scars of a thousand defeats but it grows stronger and braver and more invincible through them all, and it will never lay down the weapons of its peace-loving crusade, never cease its holy war until its triumph is complete and sets the whole world free!

The Socialist Party and Amnesty

As soon as the prosecutions during the war period resulted in the conviction and imprisonment of Socialists and others for the expression of opinion, the Socialist party commenced a continuous campaign for their release.

At the National Executive Committee meeting on January 18, 1919, elaborate plans for an Amnesty campaign were formulated, which included the formation of an amnesty conference in co-operation with other organizations.

The first meeting of this conference was held at the Socialist National Headquarters on February 20, at which tentative plans for amnesty demonstrations were made. This new organization was called the American Freedom Foundation, with the Socialist party as one of the co-operating organizations. J. Mahlon Barnes was placed in charge of the Foundation as Director.

The first convention of the Foundation was held on September 1, when a permanent organization was effected. At this convention Mr. Barnes resigned as Director and was succeeded by H. Austin Simons. A big amnesty demonstration was held at the Coliseum in Chicago early in 1920, and considerable amnesty sentiment was created among labor unions as a result of the Foundation's activity.

In November, 1919, the National Office of the Socialist party inaugurated an intensive amnesty campaign. The work was pushed vigorously, but the bitterness and hysteria of the war was still so great that the campaign was seriously hampered by the arrest of speakers, prohibition of meetings, and so forth.

Plans were made for a new amnesty campaign with a demonstration in Washington on April 13, 1920, the first anniversary of Debs' imprisonment. The lead in this amnesty drive was given to the American Freedom Foundation; but owing to opposition and refusal to co-operate by liberal groups in the East, the Foundation found it necessary to cancel their arrangements.

After this experience the Socialist party consistently followed the policy of conducting its amnesty work independently of other organizations, with the result that independent activity proved more fruitful than any previous efforts made in co-operation with other groups.

In March, 1920, the National Office took up the case of Kate Richards O'Hare, then confined at Jefferson City, Mo. George E. Roewer, Jr., was sent to North Dakota and succeeded in securing information and supporting affidavits which he took to Washington and presented to Attorney-General Palmer. This information was largely, if not wholly, responsible for the release of Mrs. O'Hare a few months later.

In May, 1920, the national convention of the Socialist party, meeting in New York City, adjourned to Washington where a committee of the convention interviewed the Attorney-General

and other prominent officials. The convention marched in a body to the White House and presented Secretary Tumulty with a memorial to the President.

Amnesty propaganda, agitation and meetings formed an important part of the presidential campaign activities of the Socialist party, which in 1920 nominated Eugene V. Debs, then Federal Prisoner No. 9653 at Atlanta, for the presidency of the United States. A number of special amnesty speakers were routed throughout the country and a large amount of amnesty literature circulated.

When the Christmas holidays of 1920 arrived without the release of the political prisoners, it became quite evident that nothing could be expected from the outgoing Wilson administration. A plan was then made to bring the matter of the politicals to the attention of the new administration immediately upon its accession to office.

During the early part of 1921 an active campaign was carried on which resulted in tens of thousands of letters and telegrams being sent to Senators and Congressmen, and to both President Wilson and President-elect Harding. A National Amnesty Headquarters was opened in Washington in charge of Harriot Stanton Blatch, and members of Congress were personally interviewed in behalf of amnesty.

This campaign culminated on April 13 with a demonstration in Washington, at which time committees interviewed President Harding, Attorney-General Daugherty, and a large number of Senators and Congressmen and other officials. A petition containing 350,000 names, and resolutions representing more than three million members of labor and other organizations were presented to Congress.

After the amnesty demonstration the headquarters were kept up in Washington under the direction of Winnie E. Branstetter, and later by Lilith Martin Wilson and Bertha Hale White.

The Socialist national convention at Detroit addressed a communication to President Harding, and on July 27, 1921, a committee consisting of Lilith Martin Wilson, Samuel J. Castleman, Norman Hapgood, William F. Kruse and William H. Johnston was received by the President, and the communication adopted by the party convention was presented.

On September 14, following, the President was again interviewed by a committee of the Socialist party composed of Bertha H. Mailly, George E. Roewer, Jr., and James Oneal, all members of the National Executive Committee. No definite action attended these interviews.

While the Christmas releases included the last of the Socialists convicted for their activities as Socialist party members, keen disappointment was felt because a great majority of the I.W.W. and the Oklahoma and Texas tenant-farmer prisoners were left in prison with no indication of future clemency.

The National Office undertook to investigate the cases of these tenant-farmers and sent Bertha Hale White to Oklahoma

in January, 1922, where she spent a month interviewing officials of the United States courts, city and county officials, and citizens. A large number of statements and letters were secured and special petitions circulated.

On March 22 these documents, together with letters and special petitions asking pardon for the Oklahoma political prisoners, were presented to President Harding by Mrs. White, who was given an assurance that the Department of Justice would re-open their cases. Later these politicals were released.

The Socialist party also co-operated with the General Defense Committee of the I.W.W. in working for the release of the I.W.W. prisoners. Altogether the party spent $17,000 on amnesty work alone, printed and distributed ten special leaflets on the subject and sent out through the National Office Press Service ninety-four amnesty articles and stories which were generally published in the party press.

"I would rather a thousand times be a free soul in jail than to be a sycophant and coward in the streets."

* * *

"They may put those boys in jail—and some of the rest of us in jail—but they can not put the Socialist Movement in jail."

* * *

"I would be ashamed to admit that I had risen from the ranks. When I rise it will be with the ranks, and not from the ranks."

* * *

"I hate, I loathe, I despise Junkerdom. I have no earthy use for the Junkers of Germany, and not one particle more for the Junkers in the United States."

* * *

"If war is right, let it be declared by the people—you, who have your lives to lose; you certainly ought to have the right to declare war, if you consider war necessary."

* * *

"The little that I am, the little that I am hoping to be, is due wholly to the Socialist Movement. It gave me my ideas and my ideals; and I would not exchange them for all of Rockefeller's blood-stained dollars."

* * *

"Do not worry over the charge of treason to your masters; but be concerned about the treason that concerns yourselves. Be true to yourself, and you can not be a traitor to any good cause on earth."

* * *

"We Socialists are the builders of the world that is to be. We are all pledged to do our part. We are inviting—aye, challenging you this afternoon, in the name of your own manhood, to join us and to do your part. In due time the hour will strike, and this great cause triumphant—the greatest in history—will proclaim the emancipation of the working class and the brotherhood of all mankind."

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

The Socialist Party of the United States is the political expression of the interests of the working class in this country, and is part of the International working class movement.

The economic basis of present-day society is the private ownership and control of the socially necessary means of wealth production, and the exploitation of the workers who operate these means of production for the profit of those who own them.

The interests of these two classes are diametrically opposed. It is the interest of the capitalist class to maintain the present system and to obtain for itself the largest possible share of the product of labor. It is the interest of the working class to improve its condition of life and get the largest possible share of its own product, so long as the present system prevails, and to end this system as quickly as it can.

In so far as the members of the opposing classes become conscious of these facts, each class strives to advance its own interests as against the other. It is this active conflict of interests which we describe as the class-struggle.

The capitalist class, by controlling the old political parties, controls the powers of the state and uses them to secure and entrench its position. Without such control of the state its position of economic power would be untenable. The workers must wrest the control of the government from the hands of the economic masters and use its powers in the upbuilding of the new social order, the Co-operative Commonwealth.

The Socialist Party seeks to organize the working class for independent action on the political field, not merely for the betterment of its conditions, but also and above all with the revolutionary aim of putting an end to exploitation and class rule. Such political action is absolutely necessary to the emancipation of the working class, and to the establishment of genuine liberty for all.

To accomplish this aim it is necessary that the working class be powerfully and solidly organized also on the economic field, to struggle for the same revolutionary goal; and the Socialist Party pledges its aid in the task of promoting such industrial organization and waging such industrial struggle for emancipation.

The fundamental aim of the Socialist Party is to bring about the social ownership and democratic control of all the necessary means of production—to eliminate profit, rent and interest and thus make it impossible for any to share the product without sharing the burden of labor—a society wherein opportunities are equal, in which the interest of one will be the interest of all.

As subordinate and accessory to this fundamental aim, it supports every measure which betters the conditions of the working class, and which increases the fighting power of that class within the present system.

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